



**FOCUS**  
MIDWEST

TWO  
STUDIES  
ON

*John M. Swomley, Jr.*

*Harold R. Piety*

ALSO

Offers Chicago  
Sense of Discovery / *John S. Blades*

Poems

Memoir / *Ruth Berges*

**RIOTS**

Kansas City, Missouri

East St. Louis, Illinois

ALSO

Liberals Must Seek  
New Coalitions / *Jerome M. Mileur*

Editorials / *How to Start a Riot*  
*"Catalysts" Confront Chicago Agencies*  
*Missouri Governor Faces Tough Election*  
*Hope in Rockford, Illinois*

# OUT OF FOCUS

(Readers are invited to submit items for publication, indicating whether the sender can be identified. Items must be fully documented and not require any comment.)

A widely held notion is that poor people spend their funds unwisely, particularly in their choice of foods. However, a government study contradicts this assumption and found that dollar for dollar, poor people buy more good, nutritious food than middle-class suburbanites and the poor spend far less on beer and wine. The analysis compared families earning less than \$3,000 a year with those earning over \$10,000 annually. Malnutrition among the poor, therefore, is not due to spending their grocery budget unwisely.

A study of Negro citizens in judicial decision-making positions in Missouri undertaken by Robert B. Curtis, attorney and civil rights activist, showed that the total number of Negroes appointed to judicial positions throughout the entire history of the State of Missouri has been one Negro circuit judge. Presently, the Judges and Commissioners on the Missouri Supreme Court, on the St. Louis, Springfield, and Kansas City Court of Appeals, the St. Louis Court of Criminal Correction, and all the Circuit Judges total 120. There are not now or ever have been any Negroes on the important Bar Committee of the 22nd Judicial Circuit. (The 22nd Judicial Circuit Commission nominated two Negroes for judgeships but Governor Hearnes did not appoint them.)

The St. Louis Board of Aldermen were counseled by Police Major Adolph Jacobsmeyer, assistant chief of field operations, to disregard a state law *requiring* its members to take an active part in quelling riots; it is "antiquated and foolhardy." The police major also announced that Brinks, Inc. had donated an armored car to the St. Louis police.

Among the documents found by students who broke into Columbia President Grayson Kirk's office was a letter from George W. Beadle, president of the University of Chicago, addressed to "Presidents of IDA Member Universities" and dated February 20, 1968. The letter stated that the Institute for Defense Analysis members should work out "a modified corporate structure" to "meet the objections of the faculty" but "allow the work of the IDA to continue without interruption" by involving "appropriate academic persons as individuals." When the Princeton faculty recently raised the "objections" which Beadle had foreseen, President Robert S. Goheen seemingly acquiesced by announcing that Princeton would "terminate its official affiliation with IDA." However, Goheen will continue as a \$12,000-a-year member of IDA's Board of Trustees, as well as Beadle. Meanwhile IDA will continue to use its facilities at Princeton, and presumably "appropriate academic persons" will continue "the work of IDA without interruption." On May 7, President Beadle had set an example for other IDA member universities by announcing—after a demonstration by Students for a Democratic Society, rather than faculty "objections"—that Chicago would terminate its "official affiliation" with IDA.

From LNS

A relatively new publishing enterprise in Washington is appealing to two different groups — Republicans and Independents — by making only a slight change in their layout. Publisher of both is Major General Homer O. Eaton (ret. AUS), who last year was a regional chairman of the National Freedom of Employment Committee, a newcomer to the anti-labor field. One of his monthly tabloids is called *National Republican Statesman*; the other is *The National Independent*. The contents of the two are the same, except for masthead (which shows different phone numbers), statement of policy (which changes approximately one sentence), name banner at the top of page one (which contrasts an elephant head with an American flag), and the subscription order blank (which charges independents \$7.50 and Republicans only \$5.00). Incidentally, the identical content is all Republican and all conservative. In fact, the one consistency is espousal of the "free enterprise system" and "Constitutional Government."

From Group Research Report

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### *A Tale of Two Cities*

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## Letters

### Reflection

F/M: Some bad things are good to know. Long ago, I had a little grocery store in a very deprived Negro neighborhood in St. Louis. A white salesman and I enjoyed many emotionally comfortable talks together when he made his rounds. I must say that race never entered any of our conversations, not even by inference.

One day a Negro boy, around 12 years old, came into the store, followed by two pre-school children, a brother and a sister. The boy wore faded and patched blue jeans, canvas shoes and a raveling old sweater. His blue shirt was unironed but unlike the rest of his inadequate clothing it was clean. The two younger children who accompanied the older boy were not only thin and ragged but also very dirty. They were strangely quiet. The 12-year-old and his sister pointed up the unexpected quietness in the children, by taking turns coughing in short, dry, snatching sounds. The 12-year-old bought one gallon of kerosene, one pound of baloney, a small can of molasses, and one loaf of bread. Exactly what he bought the day before and every single school day for the two years I had owned the store. Both parents worked, the father a six-day janitor and the mother as a five-day-a-week domestic. As a domestic, she was required to be away from home and her nine children fifteen hours per day. The 12-year-old got food for the family. They ate cold left-overs for breakfast, and baloney and molasses for lunch. The two pre-schoolers were left alone all day until the school-age children got home. They ran up and down the street, their noses invariably running, and their thin dirty, smelly clothes giving them a most pathetic look. And always they were so quiet. No laughter ever, but no sounds of any other kind either. They lived in three small dark, dirty rooms with a toilet stool set in an unlit, former clothes closet. There was a tiny, beat-up sink in the kitchen. The uncovered wood floors were always dirty with giant splinters threatening every step. The gas and electric had been cut off long before I moved into the neighborhood. The only heat was from the coal space heater in the front room and the coal fed cook stove in the kitchen. With gaping cracks and rat holes everywhere, crumbling plaster and rattling doors and windows all over, no amount of heat could ever have warmed the place. (Two of the children had been bitten by rats.) The kerosene bought by the boy was used in old-fashioned oil lamps, the only illumination in the house and by which the children studied at night, as much as any half hungry, half warm, half sick, half

clothed, confused, hopeless child can study. There was a small oil space heater which was used for a couple of hours before bedtime in the middle of the children's room. Because the mother worked at a different place every day, pay day for her was every day, which explains why the purchases were made daily.

Because the father always got home first, he got supper for the children — usually white potatoes fried with onions, thick strips of salt pork, fried first to provide the fat for frying the potatoes. Bread consisted of fried corn cakes made of corn meal, salt, and hot water. Once a week they had neck bones and black eye peas, according to the groceries they bought from me. The mother usually got home shortly after nine, when the four youngest children were in bed. They were almost always asleep when she left at six thirty a.m., in order to make the two-hour trip each way, including the long wait for the county bus to make the turn every forty minutes. I can't imagine any lullabies, any story telling, any bedtime baths or good night kisses from this tired mother. The father, a lonely failure, would find only a bitter reminder in the faces of his strangely quiet brood. To escape their unasked questions, he would crawl into bed as soon as possible, his face to the cold crumbling wall.

I explained to my friend, the white salesman, the family situation and just what the boy would do with the things he bought, and that he was father and mother to his sisters and brothers. That the truant officer (St. Louis had them then) never bothered them about being out of school. Nor did anyone bother about them playing in the street at night until midnight. My friend was speechless. He just stood and stared, while his face turned grey. Finally, he put the half empty bottle of pop on the counter, wiped his forehead, and quietly walked out. It was two weeks before he returned to the store. He seemed older and deeply troubled. He asked if there were many other families in the neighborhood living like that of the 12-year-old boy, and seemed genuinely pained to learn that many of them were just as bad off. Then he asked me how I could stand living around them. When I told him how difficult it was to find a neighborhood anywhere in a ghetto where some unpleasant human misery does not exist, even if they have to move several family units into a one-family dwelling in order to pay the rent, his color seemed to turn grey again and tight lines formed around his mouth. It was then that he announced with lowered eyes, that he had asked to be transferred to another area. He left without even waiting

for my order.

I never saw him again. I wonder if he ever forgot his old route. And I wonder if I can ever forgive this white salesman.

Gloria Pritchard  
St. Louis, Mo.

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## How to Start a Riot

Two issues ago, before the Kansas City riot, we published the official "Riot Control" plan of the Kansas City Police Department, and commented, "it (the plan) leaves too much to the discretion of the individual officer" and "the statement permitting the use of guns against rioters 'who attempt to inflict casualties,' is vague, undefined, and may be cited as a justification for a panicky policeman."

Unfortunately, these conclusions have been justified by later events. Six people are dead. As John M. Swomley, Jr. points out in his article, the killings could have been avoided in spite of the riot conditions. The unbelievable stupidity of the police to use tear gas exactly at the moment when the student crowd began to thin out and move to the Holy Name Church for a dance "till the sun goes down," is only matched by the unprovoked throwing of tear gas in a high school girl's rest room. Ironically, Sidney L. Wilens, the author of "Time Bomb in new Kansas City Police Board Rules" (FOCUS/Midwest, Vol. 6, No. 40), was a witness to one incident of police brutality and intimidation. As a result of his protest the policeman was suspended. If he wouldn't have happened to witness the abuse, would the complaint of the offended Negro have also resulted in the policeman's suspension?

Edward Dowd, former president of the St. Louis Police Board, had this to say, "When I see the Kansas City police department and the few areas where Negroes are in control and the few Negroes on the force, I am not surprised at what happened in Kansas City." The Missouri Governor, however, found no particular purpose or grievances behind the disturbances. His statements served not to heal the wounds Kansas City suffered, but split the white and black community further apart. In turn, he and Joseph J. Kelly, Jr., president of the Kansas City Police Board, were severely criticized by the Greater Kansas City Council on Religion and Race for their "lack of initiative to communicate with the Negro community."

Unlike the statements from Ilus W. Davis, Kansas City mayor, who apologized for the use of tear gas and acknowledged the validity of many black demands, the actions of the Kansas City police and the utterance of Governor Warren E. Hearnes, in effect, underscore the militants' claim that the American political system cannot accommodate new demands.

## "Catalysts" Confront Chicago Agencies

A new, powerful and, apparently, effective black egalitarian organization, "The Catalysts," has been formed in Chicago, which is trying to bring together the professionals, the skilled, the militants, the unemployed, and many others as *people* without distinction of class or background for the purpose of "liberating black people by whatever means necessary."

Among its initial projects was the listing of a set of demands which were presented to public and private agencies. Teams from "The Catalyst" have visited all agencies and have met with excellent response. Follow-up calls are now being made.

The June resignation of 61 black staff members from the Chicago Commission on Youth Welfare shows the discipline and effectiveness of the Catalysts. The social workers resigned because key positions on the CYW are filled overwhelmingly by whites, although 76 per cent of the persons served by the agency are black. While the proportion of Negroes among field staff administrators is 42.8 per cent;

among professional staff, 58 per cent; and among clerical staff, 81.5 per cent; only 5.5 per cent of the decision-making positions in the downtown office are filled by Negroes.

The demands, which follow this editorial, clearly show that their approach is intelligent and moderate. Those Americans who still fail to realize that they are only as free as the least of their brethren, may want to substitute "Episcopalian" or "Jewish" or "Catholic" wherever the word "Black" appears. The white community, and many of the blacks, have to learn that eight hours of pay to a Negro will not buy his soul for twenty-four hours, nor for eight, but only his abilities and talents.

We would like to recommend to black professionals in other communities, small and large, to draw upon the experience and groundwork of the Chicago "Catalyst" and initiate a reform movement on their own.

The demands presented to the Chicago agencies are:

1. Recognize and accept the fact that Black people with skills are accountable to the Black community before they are accountable to their executives or their boards.
2. Black people must be in positions of authority to make policy that is relevant to the Black community.
3. Professionals, with the approval of the indigenous community, will recommend appointees to boards, both local and metropolitan.
4. Specially funded projects and programs purported to alleviate the problems in the Black community must be designed not to control but to liberate, therefore we demand that:
  - a. members of the target population be consulted before projects affecting them are designed and/or implemented.
  - b. programs and projects be evaluated not only internally but by those whom they seek to serve as well.
  - c. Black community governing boards be formed to both approve and design programs.
5. Executives and their boards must use the influence and power inherent in their positions to gain redress of grievances in the Black community by:
  - a. protesting illegal arrests and indiscriminate unconstitutional setting of bonds.
  - b. actively fighting against discrimination in housing in violation of the 1963 Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance and the 1968 National Open Occupancy Law.
  - c. supporting federal legislation now pending against local craft unions and to refrain from contracting with such unions.
  - d. helping eradicate unemployment by the utilization of existing manpower in the black community; and by opening up meaningful jobs, with an opportunity for advancement, in public and private industry.
  - e. insuring that community people be involved in the plans for the building and rebuilding of black communities and that black contractors be utilized for both contracting and subcontracting.
  - f. supporting concerned parents groups of schools in black communities by allotting meeting space, making professional and clerical services available, consulting them in the formulation of agency policy relative to community schools.
  - g. insisting that Black history and culture be taught in all schools and agencies in Black communities now.
  - h. instituting programs, or whatever method deemed necessary, to eradicate white racism thus enabling white people (specifically the police) to see black people as human beings.
  - i. supporting the demands of Black students (who are often participants in public and private agency programs) who are waging war against: obsolete facilities, high teacher turnover, unequal distribution of substitute teachers throughout the school system, a standardized white curriculum not geared to the needs of Black students, lack of respect for students, a tract system that confines lower class youth to a blue collar future in an increasingly white collar world.
6. Work for the dissolution of the Welfare System and the institution of the Guaranteed Annual Income.
7. The Director of every program which purports to serve the Black community should be headed by a Black person with salaries commensurate with the skill required and the job definition.

8. All people present should immediately call upon the Mayor of the City of Chicago to implement a disaster plan to effectively deal with the provision of food, shelter, clothing, and medical supplies when crises situations arise in the city.

9. Agencies and organizations which serve the Black community must share its resources with that community, i.e., the depositing of funds in Black banks, purchase of goods from purveyors and producers that are Black, insurance from Black companies, printing and advertising from Black firms.

Any agency that doesn't recognize that they are in the midst of a revolution and that Black people are going to be self-determining is no longer relevant and must deal with the question of survival. Realizing that many white people are not accustomed to being confronted by Black people in this manner, we wish to make it crystal clear that we will accept no reprisals for exercising our constitutional rights.

Recognizing the influence embodied in those present, we sincerely urge that your vigorous attention be applied immediately to the aforementioned demands so that the words of the late Black leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will have significance for every American: Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we're free at last!

## Missouri Governor Faces Tough Election

If Governor Warren E. Hearnes has set out to alienate intentionally the liberal and black communities in Missouri, he couldn't have done a better job. Whenever he had a chance to take advantage of a situation which would have improved his image, such as when he made several excellent appointments to the board of curators of the formerly all-black Lincoln University, he remained so aloof from involvement with interested Negro groups (such as the Lincoln U. Alumni) in the pre-appointment phase, that it was interpreted as arrogance if not worse. Yet, when there was no need to become enmeshed, such as following the recent Kansas City riot, he went out of his way to uphold "law and order" without a mention of other social factors and even accused the clergy of interfering with actions by the Kansas City police — while Kansas City's mayor, Ilus W. Davis, apologized to his city for the unnecessary police use of tear gas, which, as Rev. Swomley points out in his article in this issue, largely precipitated the riot.

As has been reported in the press, his break with Freedom, Inc., a black political group in Kansas City led by Rep. Leon Jordan, has reached the point of no return. When the group criticized the Governor's civil rights attitude, he fired three Negro state employees, all members of Freedom, Inc. The Governor explained, "these employees belong to an organization which does not believe in law and order." If the Governor truly believes that Freedom, Inc. represents the "militant Negro" he is frightfully ignorant and is in for a rude awakening. The *Kansas City Star* pointed out that the leaders of Freedom, Inc. were among those who worked hardest to cool the riot situation, maintain order, and save lives and property. The Governor has a lot to learn.

As expected, members of Freedom, Inc. walked out during the Governor's speech at the Missouri Democratic state convention. While it would have been diplomatic to make a conciliatory move, or at least ignore the walk-out, the Governor blew up the incident. Throwing away his prepared remarks, he boasted, "I'd rather go down in defeat than to compromise my principles and turn this state over to people who believe in and condone the destruction of life, limb and property." In a half-hearted defense, one of his aides declared, "after all, he also has feelings." Exactly! Whenever his feelings take over, it seems that he is much more the product of Southeastern Missouri

politics than representative of the state's largely urban population.

Governor Hearnes was elected four years ago on an "anti-establishment" platform. With the help of many liberals he defeated the incumbent Governor's heir apparent. Then, many felt that Missouri politics had turned the corner, that it was finally willing to catch up in education, social welfare, and in the many areas which make for a modern and progressive state. Thanks to Governor Hearnes, the state has made an enviable record in some areas. The fight against air pollution is the outstanding example. Some progress has been made in mental health, in education, and other areas. But the Governor has abysmally failed in helping Missouri's mayors attack urban problems, he has failed in enlisting urban and black leadership in solving the state's problems. Whether he was hemmed in by his pre-campaign promise of no raise in taxes, or by the knowledge that all legislative proposals must ultimately be passed by an essentially conservative Missouri House and Senate, or whether he felt that his program was adequate, the end result of growing disenchantment with his administration is the same. Earlier, his lack of support for Kansas City interests lost him the support of key political groups and leaders there. More recently, the St. Louis city administration has become highly critical. In fact, the mayors of Missouri's six largest cities have formed an "urban coalition" to establish and promote greater state aid to cities and school districts. This coalition represents also a vote of no confidence in the Governor.

The Governor has begun talking about "creative localism," or as the cynics interpret it, "I can't solve your problems, see what you can do on your own." Speaking for St. Louis, Comptroller John H. Poelker put it bluntly, "the city wants money, not more home rule powers, from the state." As one example of what states can do, the Governor should study Wisconsin Governor Knowles' program for Milwaukee's inner city as reported in our last issue. If the one million dollar cost of the Kansas City riot would have been earlier allocated to help relieve the needs of that city's ghetto, the riot might have been averted.

The Governor has the proclivity to favor "fiscal responsibility" at the expense of essential measures in the field of welfare. It took a statewide drive to move him to support Title 19. Since then the Governor has attacked federal social security and welfare legislation that would require states to provide medical care for the indigent by 1975 and he has objected to making "Aid to Dependent Children with Unemployed Fathers" (ADCU) mandatory in federal legislation (although he supports state enactment of such a measure); and he has been highly critical of student and faculty protests again without any qualifications that they may represent a just cause.

EDITORIAL CONTINUED ON PAGE EIGHT

## THE KANSAS CITY COMMISSION REPORT

The Mayor's Commission on Civil Disorders, appointed in the wake of the April riots, issued its Report as this issue went to press. It is reasonable, comprehensive, includes forty-three specific recommendations, incisively examines race relations in Kansas City, and joins its national counterpart, the Kerner Report, in placing the ultimate blame on white attitudes. However, it is questionable whether the Kansas City Report awaits a more significant role in the life of the city than the Kerner Report experienced nationally.

The civil disturbances — rooted in the conditions of white racism — were precipitated by a series of specific police acts which turned impromptu memorial marches into near-riots

## *The Kansas City Riot Could Have Been Averted* / John M. Swomley, Jr.

The April riots in Kansas City were by no means the largest or most serious in the nation. Yet, they dramatized a problem inherent in other riots, that of bad relations between the police and residents of the black ghetto.

When the April riots in Kansas City were over, six black persons were dead, scores wounded, and \$915,000 worth of property had been destroyed. One of the most serious consequences was the damage to community relations. Moderate Negroes and community leaders, who had been vocal supporters of the police, discovered during the riots that all black men were treated alike. Some believed that the police, 94.5% a white force, were in fact making war on the entire black community. According to the *Kansas City Star*, Herman Johnson, metropolitan NAACP president said, "the apparent aim of the police department during recent rioting was to ring the entire Negro area to prevent damage in the white community and to patrol the area to prevent damage to businesses." Johnson also said, "police should have ringed trouble areas within the Negro district and given the same protection to peaceful Negro neighborhoods as was given white neighborhoods." Instead, he asserted that, "because of police, it was extremely dangerous to be a Negro anywhere in the Negro community during the rioting, despite the fact that only a tiny group actually caused the trouble."

The police, on the other hand, viewed their action as a major triumph in law enforcement. The Kansas City police claimed theirs was the first city in the nation where not one block or building was abandoned by law enforcement officers. "We never gave up a block," said C. M. Kelley, chief of police. Although many white clergymen were critical of the police for precipitate use of tear gas, the white community in general stood with the police or remained silent.

### **The Events of April 9**

At approximately 8:00 on the morning of Tuesday, April 9, students from Lincoln High School, an all-Negro institution, began to march to other black schools, apparently to express their feelings after the murder of Martin Luther King. They were unhappy over the decision the day before to keep the schools open. That decision had been made by white Board of Education personnel in consultation with the chief of police, who believed there would be less trouble if students were kept off the streets.

When students, apparently from Central High (another Negro school), rushed through the hallways of Central Junior High about 8:30 a.m. shouting "school's out," the school principal phoned the police, fearful that the crowd would tear up the building. No damage was done, and the group was quickly herded out of the building. A second group of older youths invaded the Junior High School about 25 minutes later. Some of them grabbed books and threw them out of windows. At about 9:15 a.m., the principal of Central High dismissed school, urging students to go home to watch the King funeral on television.

The students from two other high schools, Lincoln and Manual, came in sight, and those from Central joined the march. At this point, some students and older community leaders suggested that a memorial service be held at Central instead of continuing the march. The marchers paused and headed toward Central. According to the *Kansas City Star*, police car No. 77, with four officers, approached the crowd. *Chemical Mace was sprayed on the crowd from the car.* "Initially," said the *Star*, "the students had one cause, which they voiced loudly: they wanted the day off to mark the funeral of Dr. King. But the use of Mace apparently gave them another rallying issue."

As the mood of the crowd changed, there were shouted



## Editorials (continued from page six)

Unfortunately, Lawrence Roos, the GOP gubernatorial candidate, offers no alternative to Missouri voters. When Hearnese proposed public housing in St. Louis County to bring people and job opportunities together, Roos, who happens to be supervisor of St. Louis County, immediately rejected this creative proposal as intolerable.

Only in mid-July, when addressing the Grand Lodge of the F. & A. M. of Missouri, the Negro masonic order, did the Governor mention that there are other aspects to rioting than law and order. He declared, "The problems of civil rights, of civil opportunities — like the problem of rioting in the streets — demands not only long range planning but immediate, forceful attention as well." This simple statement said earlier at the right time and the right place, *that means during the height of the Kansas City riot and not shortly before the primary*, would have opened doors to the black community. If followed by an action program worked out in partnership with black leaders, the Governor's reelection would have been assured.

There is a long, long time between the primary and general election. Whatever the protest vote against Hearnese, which he can choose to ignore, the Governor should come down into the ghettos of Missouri's cities, sit down with its true leaders (not its public figureheads), and listen. That's all. Promises are not expected. They come cheap in an election year. But communications between the state's leadership and its citizens must remain open. The Governor owes that much to all those who once voted for him.

### Hope in Rockford, Illinois

Following publication of our "Police" issue (No. 40), we have been receiving additional information on the professionalism of police departments in various communities. We plan to offer our readers summaries of the information gathered from time to time.

Rockford, Illinois, is blessed with a conscientious chief of police, who, unfortunately, has little support in the white community in his effort to promote understanding between the races. He must work with a city council and a mayor who share the white community's attitude.

Chief Del Peterson himself has come under criticism for defending his police force when it was charged with failing to understand black sensitivities.

Police training sessions have been held for "old-timers" (twelve hours) and recruits (three hours). At these sessions the policemen frequently challenged the assumptions of the speakers promoting cooperation and understanding.

Among the specific complaints from the black community are police overreaction during the 1967 summer (e.g., four instead of two men to a squad car; saturation cruising in the ghetto); use of excessive force in the black community; and creating tensions by inconsiderate actions.

Yet, a series of recent steps promise constructive changes and have helped to ease relations. Following the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, the police fully cooperated in the arrangements for a community memorial march. Also, two black officers were hired for a total of three. Three days after King's assassination, an open occupancy ordinance was passed 11 to 9. If Chief Peterson can win over the white establishment (and not be squeezed out by his underlings as happened in racist Carbondale), Rockford may look forward to building a reasonably progressive community. It can be done. ■

suggestions to march downtown. Over the objections of some of the older leaders, Vernon Thompson began to lead the march downtown. Shortly after 10:00 a.m., while the march was in process, Missouri Highway Patrolmen moved into the downtown area and Governor Warren E. Hearnes activated the National Guard. *A few minutes later, a detective arrested Vernon Thompson.*

As the march progressed, police made a line across the street at Thirty-first near Troost and fired tear gas. The crowd dispersed in many directions, but the main body, which had stopped a few blocks away, listened to speeches urging order and calm before resuming the march. It was described by the April 9 *Star* as "a largely peaceful march of more than 1,000 Negroes."

Mayor Ilus Davis, who had been informed the students wanted to meet with him at Parade Park, went there to speak to the crowd. With his back to a police car and then from the hood of the car, he tried to talk to the group. One of the young leaders, Leo Bohannon, known as Lebo, came to believe the Mayor and the police with their gas masks, were simply trying to contain them. Lebo asked why the march could not continue downtown. "Is it because, Mr. Mayor, you want to keep the black problems in the black part of town? Are you ashamed of us, Mr. Mayor? Is that why you keep us out here with your policemen and the clubs and the gas? We want to find out. We want to go downtown!" Within a minute or two, the Mayor was helped off the car and, arm in arm with two men, began to march again.

A few blocks away, there was another line of police wearing gas masks. The police, who were under strict orders not to let anyone pass, refused to let the Mayor through the line until a high-ranking police officer intervened. In Kansas City, the Mayor has no authority over the police. It is one of two cities in the United States where the Governor controls the police department.

After the crowd got past the police, about 700 persons broke and ran, leaving the Mayor and others behind. The Mayor proceeded to City Hall via police car and walked east to meet the crowd, who were approaching City Hall. By this time, according to a police report, 100 to 150 "colored males and females" were attempting to force their way into Jones Department Store. They were dispersed with tear gas.

In the meantime, Mayor Davis was speaking to about 300 to 400 marchers near City Hall. A disc jockey for KPRS, a Negro-owned radio station, suggested that everyone go to the Holy Name Roman Catholic Church for a rock 'n' roll dance.

### The Canisters Began to Fly

Before the students could get to the Church, a police line of 80 to 90 men wearing gas masks massed nearby. The *Kansas City Star* description said, "A photograph taken moments before the policemen began to use gas reveals that about 100 Negroes were on the sidewalk, the lawn, or in the street on the west half of the block, closest to the police line. It also shows only a few of them near the police line and that the majority had their backs to the policemen." *Nevertheless, the tear gas canisters began to fly.*

The police explanations afterwards are confused. Some officers said tear gas was thrown because a pop bottle was thrown in the direction of the police. Episcopal Bishop Robert Spears saw the pop bottle break near an officer's

feet. Another officer claimed that he saw two Negroes steal two gas canisters that had been laid down by another officer and that he later saw these youths throw the canisters into their own crowd. Few Negroes believe this story or can understand how two Negroes could get close enough to the police to steal tear gas without being apprehended.

An officer who used Mace said he had been subjected to taunts and obscenities, and one Negro had spat on him. Another officer said the gas was provoked by a Negro woman who walked close to the police "cursing them and striking at them but not quite hitting them." Some critics wonder why the police could not tolerate abusive words that resulted in no injuries. *Others ask why individual offenders were not arrested, instead of tear-gassing an entire crowd.*

After the tear gas was thrown and the crowd began to run away from it, the police began to use clubs on the crowd. Two Episcopal priests in clerical garb, Canon David Fly, the white pastor of the Cathedral, and the Rev. Edward L. Warner, the Negro pastor of St. Augustine's Church, were clubbed. One patrolman afterwards said, "Due to the confusion and the impaired vision caused by the gas mask, I did not know he was a priest." Father Warner asserted that he was struck again after he had fallen. Canon Fly was clubbed when he went to Father Warner's aid after he saw a patrolman hit Warner. After Canon Fly had been struck to the ground and was blinded by tear gas, he said, "Five of my black friends came to my aid and picked me up and said, 'Let's give our brother a hand,' and carried me away." At the hospital, where he was taken by a TV reporter, Canon Fly was found to have cracked cartilages in the right rib cage.

A white Roman Catholic priest, Lawrence McNamara, who was present at City Hall, stated that, if instructions to police at City Hall had been to treat students as "by and large a good group of kids, the police could not only have contained them but changed some deep-seated feelings."

About an hour after the City Hall incident, Father McNamara, who had gone to Holy Name Church, said he saw many police cars descending on the Church. *He ran outside and into tear gas to try to contact officers to tell them there was no problem.* When the gas cleared away, he said, "I was never so scared in my life. I observed the officers throwing the bolt forward on their rifles and all advancing toward us.

"I shouted to the police, 'Don't shoot.' " The police did not shoot, but Father Timothy Gibbons, associate pastor of the Church, reported (according to the diocesan paper, *The New People*) that during the dance "several canisters of gas were tossed into the hall from windows on the west side and that police broke windows on the south side, also, and lobbed in containers." Father Gibbons said he asked a policeman with a gas mask for assistance in getting the students out but received none. "It was impossible to see," said Father Gibbons. "Everyone was blind, choking. Kids crowded up under the bandstand. Some hid in the closet. It was a terrible job getting them out." The priest asked who had authorized the use of gas in such quantities in the Church. He said, "One officer told me that they had all the authorization they needed."

The police position is that a police car passing near the Church was pelted by bricks. Other cars responded to their call, with officers firing gas to disperse small groups of young people who were watching the incident. The police

claimed that they had no knowledge of the dance. Sgt. England, according to the *Kansas City Star*, said, "the police did not know if the people in the Church 'were armed or destroying property'."

## The Mood Changed

After these various tear gas incidents, the temper of many black people changed to open hostility toward the police. As the *Kansas City Star* round-up stated, "Events Tuesday afternoon built swiftly toward a riot situation."

On Wednesday, April 10, police tear-gassed students at Lincoln High School. Police reports are in conflict over the cause of the gassing. One officer claims that a patrolman was injured by a stone before the gas was used. *But the police log records gas being used before Patrolman Fordyce, who was injured by a stone, was on the scene.* The unanswered question: Was another patrolman also injured? But in any event, six girls, who were burned and gassed by a grenade thrown by the police into a girls' restroom in the school, were taken to the hospital. All policemen who were questioned, however, denied throwing a tear gas missile into the school. Harry I. Harwell, the school principal, called the use of gas a "... wanton attack on my children. If it had been a white school, they wouldn't have done it."

That night four Negro men were shot and three white men wounded. The incident began when two patrolmen and two national guardsmen advanced with fixed bayonets into a parking lot across the street from the Byron Hotel in the black ghetto. One of the guardsmen, William F. Jewett, was shot in the right forearm and fell to the ground. Jewett said that at the time he thought the shots came from the Byron Hotel, but indicated that later he was uncertain about their origin.

The manager of the hotel, Emmett Finney, who had just finished boarding up some windows in front of the hotel, noted people still milling around in the area near the hotel which the police had just roped off. Apparently the police decided to clear the area by using tear gas. Finney and others ran into the hotel and started up the stairs to the lobby, which was well back on the second floor. Finney said he heard someone shout that a guardsman had been shot, adding that if a shot had come from the hotel he would have heard it. He had not, however, heard the shot. The police headed toward the hotel and fired tear gas into the small front entrance, trapping a number of people who had sought refuge from the gas in the street. *A 50-year-old Negro minister and his 16-year-old son, George McKinney, Jr., were shot and killed, Finney believes, when they ran from the hotel entrance to escape the gas.* The police say that those running from the hotel were caught in the cross-fire between snipers and the police, whereas Finney asserts that it was physically impossible for anyone running from the hotel to be caught in any except police crossfire. The hotel building was surrounded by police, who ordered everyone in the back to lie down in the parking lot. *Finney said he offered to open all doors in the hotel with his keys, but the officers instead chose to break in all the doors.* The only firearms found were in the hotel office, and none had been fired. No snipers were found in the hotel, although the police steadfastly maintain they saw muzzle flashes in the windows of the hotel.

The third death in the area was 43-year-old Charles Shugg Martin, who had been drinking all day and did not

respond immediately when ordered to move.

The fourth death occurred when 38-year-old Julius Hamilton, apparently in response to an order to come out, opened the door of a first floor apartment. Actually, the police were telling an officer who was between the building to come out "and we will cover you." *Hamilton was killed by a slug from a police riot gun, although he had no gun and there was no evidence he was threatening anyone.*

None of the four men killed was carrying a weapon.

Rep. Harold Holliday, a Negro member of the Missouri legislature, said that "what happened at the Byron Hotel would not have occurred at the Plaza. The police just opened fire on anyone who happened to be in the way."

During the riots, a group of Kansas City clergymen and theological students manned a communications center at the Metropolitan Inter-Church Agency. They also had observers in strategic locations throughout the city and at the police stations, magistrate's court, City Hall, and three hospitals. When the city and county jails were filled and unable to handle curfew violators, the police agreed to release them into the custody of the clergy. The violators could not be taken into the riot areas, so receiving centers were set up in available churches downtown, where they could spend the night. Clergymen, lawyers, and social workers were on duty all night at these centers.

Clergymen were told by persons who were brought to the centers that pocket knives, watches, and other personal items were taken from them without being receipted. One man reported being made to lie on the street while police kicked him and shot in the dirt beside him. His girl friend was forced to "take her drawers off" so she could be frisked. She was taken with four patrolmen in a patrol car while he went in a paddy wagon. He did not see her again before he was taken to one of the church centers, and she was not sent there. A high school boy reported seeing police force a girl to remove some of her clothes. A young man with a piece of glass in his eye was brought to Grace and Holy Trinity for curfew violation, but the police did not take him to the hospital.

### "Dehumanizing and Discriminatory"

On the second day of the riots, the Metropolitan Inter-Church Agency's administrative committee, at a special session, charged the Kansas City police department with "dehumanizing and discriminatory practices" toward Negroes during and after the demonstrations by students.

Although there were many allegations of police brutality against Negroes, only one was witnessed by a white man willing to appear on behalf of the beaten black man. Lester Blue, a 35-year-old employee at Wendell Phillips Elementary School, stopped at a traffic light at the same time as a police patrol car. Blue stated that Patrolman Richard Goering jumped from his car with his riot gun in hand, saying, "Get out, you black —!" The victim said the officer stuck his riot gun in the window of the car and placed it against his cheek. *After Blue got out of his car, the officer allegedly began hitting him in the face and back with his gun butt.* Blue also stated that Goering cocked his riot gun and pulled the trigger, but it clicked and did not go off. Goering then drove off without making an arrest, according to both Blue and the witness. As a result of the protest by Sidney Willens, a white attorney, the patrolman was suspended pending an investigation.

It was not simply the absence of witnesses that made it difficult to sustain charges of police brutality. A number of black persons report that police had taken off their badges. Father Lawrence McNamara, a white priest, confirmed this. During the Holy Name Church incident, he said, "Two sergeants I got close to did not have name tags."

Another tragedy of the riots was the handling of those arrested by the police. The *Kansas City Star* reported on April 11 that "No attempts have been made to release any of the committed persons on bail. Since attorneys have not been appointed, motions have not been filed to reduce bonds to a figure that the defendants might meet." The week following the riots, 160 persons were still in the Jackson County Jail because of excessive bail, ranging from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Preliminary hearings had not even been held because police officers were kept on stand-by basis and, therefore, were unable to make court appearances. The following are examples of the bail set for specific charges: possession of a fire bomb, \$100,000; carrying a concealed weapon, \$50,000; stealing more than \$50, \$50,000; stealing under \$50, \$5,000.

There were cases of wrong arrest. One case involved about 10 youths who, while fleeing police bullets, ran onto the porch of a house. The owner, who feared they would damage his property, stepped out onto the porch in time to be arrested with the youths. He was in custody two days before his story could be heard.

As late as May 10, the *Kansas City Call* reported that the mother and the widow of two of the men killed by policemen on April 10 claimed they had not been officially notified of the deaths or the circumstances surrounding them.

### "I Am Sorry"

Reactions to the incidents of the riot week were mixed. Mayor Davis, on a TV program, referred to the use of gas at City Hall and said, "I am sorry that there was any tear gas, and actually I would say 95% to 98% of the students were very orderly and were very restrained."

Chief of Police C. M. Kelley stated, "No operation of the magnitude of the riot control could be completed without some errors. I believe them, however, to be minimized and of the type that occur when men have little time to engage in careful reflection . . ."

The director of the Methodist Metropolitan Planning Commission and senior National Guard chaplain in Missouri, the Rev. Shrum Burton, said he "understood the intensity of feeling of the black community, who felt the overemphasis of tear gas and dispersing of student demonstrations offended their own sense of dignity and worth . . . It is strange that our society says it cannot afford programs that are creative in the ghetto but can afford to call National Guard troops to duty at the cost of more than \$90,000 per day."

A group of leaders of Negro organizations and whites active in civil rights movements sent a long telegram to the U.S. Department of Justice asking a full investigation of the police action and expressing concern about the praise of the police by the Governor of Missouri "after having knowledge of the complaints of the chairmen of various civic and civil rights organizations."

Elijah Parnell, a Negro in his 70's, expressed the mood of many in the black ghetto when he said, "The police have used a reign of terror on Negroes for a long time, and it is



just natural for them to do what they did because they have been taught that. Negroes are only paying back some of the things whites have done to them."

The most charitable comments about the police coming from their critics are that they are underpaid, poorly educated, often from rural Missouri or other communities with stereotypes about Negroes and inadequately trained to deal with black people as human beings.

A high-ranking police official was quoted in the *Kansas City Star* of May 5 as saying, "The police department hasn't been given enough money to get the mature, educated men whose judgment can stand retrospective review."

The chief of police, who was subject to a great deal of criticism, was apparently torn between maintaining the morale of his men and placating his critics. The *Kansas City Star* said, "Whatever the chief's personal opinions about the conduct of his men, he appeared to feel his primary duty was to maintain order. To have hurt the morale of his men could have reduced their effectiveness in this role."

Much of the criticism leveled at Chief Kelley should have been directed at the Assistant Chief of Police, Lt. Col. James Newman, who made trips to other riot-torn areas to decide on Kansas City procedure. Newman made speeches prior to the riots reflecting the attitudes of riot control and community relations that were demonstrated in the handling of the crowds before the shooting began.

The over-all picture of \$915,000 damage during the riots reveal \$829,000 to buildings, inventories, motor cars, and in looting. Of that, \$530,000 was caused by 98 arson fires, \$79,000 by looting and damage to liquor stores, about \$53,000 in broken glass, and \$163,000 inventory loss due to fire.

In six days of civil disorder in Kansas City, there were 287 felony arrests, or an average of fewer than 50 a day. The 1966 FBI report shows 18,385 felony (plus 9,267 larceny thefts under \$50) arrests in Kansas City, or an average of 50 a day in a non-riot year.

All of the civilians wounded by gunfire were Negro, as were all those who were killed. Two National Guardsmen and one fireman were wounded by sniper fire, but no police officer was the victim of gunfire. One young Negro woman, Miss LaNita Jackson, a research assistant for the Institute for Community Studies, said, "You can see that only property was destroyed. They weren't trying to kill whites, because if they were, they could have."

Police Captain Norman Caron estimated that snipers actually fired at 25 to 30 locations but said that there may have been only from 5 to 20 actual snipers. The maximum law enforcement level to cope with snipers, looters, arsonists, and thwarted high school students was 940 city policemen, 180 Missouri Highway Patrolmen, 30 Jackson County sheriff's deputies, and nearly 3,000 National Guardsmen.

### No Riot in Kansas

In contrast to events in Kansas City, Missouri, there was no rioting in Kansas City, Kansas, which also has a large black population. In Kansas City, Kansas, there was the same student unrest after the assassination of Dr. King, but the school authorities dismissed school, and the police, instead of trying to suppress the student marches, assisted the students.

After a school assembly on Friday, April 5, in memory of Dr. King, about 1,000 Negro students from Sumner and

Wyandotte High Schools marched through the downtown area. The parade was led by two uniformed officers, one white and one Negro, both on motorcycles. Other Negro officers in plain clothes were also in the march.

Major Boston Daniels, a Negro officer who came to Wyandotte High School, told the students, "We are most happy to be here. We did not come here to disturb your march. We came to march with you." Daniels asked that students be selected to lead the march. From Wyandotte, the march moved to Sumner High School and thence to City Hall, where Mayor Joseph McDowell told the students he was happy they were there to express what was in their hearts "and what is in the hearts of all Americans." After the meeting at City Hall, Major Daniels said, "We appreciate the way you have conducted yourselves. I hope you'll return to your classes now. That's where we're going to win." Then Major Daniels started walking with the students.

The April 5 *Kansas City Star* description said, "Daniels remained cool and kindly over the bullhorn, putting some of his remarks on a personal basis, with effectiveness. 'Will you do me a favor and stay in the street,' he said when some of the youths strayed onto the sidewalk along Minnesota."

*The attitude of the black people of Kansas City, Kansas, toward the police department improved, rather than deteriorated.* This began earlier when police guilty of continual police brutality were dismissed. But the most striking difference in the two cities was the attitude toward the students and toward Dr. King's death. By encouraging and supporting a responsible expression of the feelings of the students, the police demonstrated their own concern and sorrow over the death of Dr. King.

*Another contrast between the cities shows 53 Negro police officers out of 940 in Kansas City, Missouri, but 46 Negro officers in a force of 208 in Kansas City, Kansas.*

The Kansas City, Missouri, police indicate that they want to recruit more Negro officers, but the police image in the black ghetto is not such as to be very enticing.

The Kansas City, Missouri, riot story is a sad one, not because the police are worse than the white community at large, or because of black militants. These are myths. *The police represent the racial attitudes of the Governor, most of the white citizens of Kansas City, and the suburban business elite that rule the city.* Significantly, in Kansas City, Kansas, it was black militants who helped to preserve order!

The sad part about the police in Kansas City, Missouri is that they sent top officers to other riot-torn cities to learn how to deal with riots, but apparently they learned nothing from the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders about preventing the kind of police practices that precipitate riots.

*John M. Swomley, Jr. is Professor of Christian Ethics at St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri. He has been published in the Nation, the Progressive, Christian Century, and other magazines, and is the author of many books and pamphlets. He is also the editor of Current Issues, a periodical analyzing foreign affairs.*

# NEGROES INVADE POLICE STATION, PRESS OFFICES

Group in E. St. Louis  
Most of Them Set

## 12 Fires Fought in E. St. Louis

East St. Louis firemen were kept busy last night and early this morning fighting 12 fires, including the H & H Fixture Co. and the S. English Florist shop.

## East Side Militants, School Officials Meet

Boyd Mitchell, superintendent of East St. Louis public schools, met today with Black militants to seek a solution to the demand for a number of teachers who were paid less than the city. The cafeteria was not a teacher private fund.

## Militants Disrupt Schools Again In E. St. Louis

A group of Negro militants disrupted East St. Louis schools for the second day, causing the two schools to close. About 10,000 students were affected Thursday. The district is out of class Wednesday due to school closings. The district has nearly 23,000 students, 60 per cent of whom are Negroes. There was no violence Thursday. Large numbers of Illinois state police and Illinois state troopers stayed close to the schools and students marching.

**Legal** A legal question is whether the obligation of the program is on the school or the city. Mitchell said that the students are getting paid and that the Board of Education has laid off the workers their back.

## WORKERS REHIRE

The group demanded that cafeteria workers who were laid off recently be paid back wages and rehired, and that the Board of Education agree to provide the same facilities in schools as exist in schools in predominantly white areas.

## East Side Center Popular With Racial Activists

A gathering place for many of those who have participated in the disturbances in East St. Louis this week is a federally-funded recreation center called Impact House at 1207 Missouri avenue. Many of the Impact leaders were on the stage with Black Power spokesman H. R. Brown when he spoke yesterday. A musical part of the program was the target of stones and bottles as they crashed last night in the area of the Pruitt-Igou housing project. One police car was damaged.

Black Power slogans adorn the walls and many of those who congregated at the building affect the African garb or bib overalls that are trademarks of militant black nationalism. The project that the youths it would attract would be the ones most likely to participate in any violence," he said. He said the program was similar to a Chicago project involving the Blackstone Rangers, a Negro gang.

## 35 ARRESTED IN E. ST. LOUIS RACIAL STRIFE

Four Persons Are In-  
After Bomb Threats

## E. St. Louis Schools Closed, Teachers Demand Protection

Nearly all schools in East St. Louis closed Wednesday and teachers demanded city officials provide them protection from bomb threats after a second day of school closings. Dr. Boyd Mitchell, superintendent of schools, said all schools in the district will open Thursday. He said he has been assured by police officials that adequate measures will be taken to insure security at the schools. About 200 Negro students marched in orderly fashion from Lincoln High School to East Broadway, and then down to the City Hall about 10:30 a.m. Police kept pace with the march and there were no incidents.

## WILL REOPEN

Dr. Boyd Mitchell, superintendent of schools, said all schools in the district will open Thursday. He said he has been assured by police officials that adequate measures will be taken to insure security at the schools. About 200 Negro students marched in orderly fashion from Lincoln High School to East Broadway, and then down to the City Hall about 10:30 a.m. Police kept pace with the march and there were no incidents.

## FEARED TROUBLE

Principals at some of the schools reported that non-student groups were on the grounds and they feared there would be trouble. Sgt. Curtis Smith, who responded to the radio dispatch, said the firebomb at Lincoln High School was made from a 6-ounce medicine bottle filled with kerosene. The neck of the bottle broke but there was no fire. He said the boy who threw the bomb was apprehended and escorted from the building.

# *Revolution Comes to East St. Louis /*

Harold R. Piety

Four hand grenades exploded on the night of April 26 in East St. Louis, Illinois, one of them in a crowded tavern on the city's main street.

The revolution—the term favored by militant black nationalists—had come to East St. Louis.

Battle was joined two nights later when city police, aided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and state police, raided the apartment of one of the militant Negro leaders and seized three more hand grenades, along with a cache of rifle cartridges and stacks of what police called “plans for terrorism.” The young Negro who lived in the apartment is awaiting trial on charges of violating weapons laws. Another youth was charged with attempted murder in connection with the grenade that exploded in a tavern, and a third militant leader was charged with interfering with police officers. All are free on bond.

The barrage of grenades was the climax to three days of tension and occasional terror in the city's schools, but that crisis was only a manifestation of a deeper, broader, and more serious racial confrontation toward which the city seems to be hurtling at a bewildering pace. Indeed, so swift has been the rush of events in the last few months that remedies suggested yesterday are obsolete today, primarily, it seems, because of an apparent new unity among black radicals, and the emergence in the black nationalist groups of something approaching a common philosophy. Unity is the source of immediate strength for the revolutionists, and there are signs that it is coming—finally.

## **Black Economic Union Emerges**

The revolution in East St. Louis began officially early in April when black nationalist leaders from East St. Louis, St. Louis, Carbondale, Cairo, and Memphis, Tennessee, met in East St. Louis to form the Black Economic Union. (Chicago was part of the Union but dropped out; Peoria joined later.) Just what the Black Economic Union is, what kind of strength it has, and who directs it are questions known only to its leaders. Its purpose is clear enough: the Union means to speed the takeover by Negro ghetto residents of white-owned businesses and institutions; it wants to generate black economic independence by the creation of cooperatives of all kinds; it intends to control those institutions

that have the greatest impact on the lives of the ghetto residents, i.e. schools, city government, War on Poverty agency. The Union intends that the white man finance the takeover, and is directing its first attention to churches and foundations in the matter of raising funds. The Union has two board members in each of the cities in the organization, and counts the young, essentially autonomous gangs and groups of Negroes in the various cities as members of the Union. To this extent it resembles a rather loose confederation of equal groups without central authority, an image that has not yet been tested for its accuracy.

While the formation of the Union signalled active revolution of a kind, the roots of unrest in East St. Louis go deep into the past—back even to the 1917 riot, a bloodbath in which official accounts listed 49 dead (most of them black).

The roots go back to the more recent past, in the years following the historic 1954 school desegregation decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, when Homer G. Randolph began a generally lonely battle against discrimination in East St. Louis, especially in the schools. A tall, middle-aged Negro high school teacher, he picketed in white ducks and saddle oxfords emblazoned with civil rights slogans. Only school children marched with him, and he was dismissed by white and black in the city as a clown; but for others he began to articulate the sense of betrayal that would become sharpened in later years, when other decisions and other legislation did little to affect the status quo. He got more help in the 1963 demonstrations against East St. Louis banks and downtown merchants, but still seemed more interested in tilting at windmills than in applying himself to an orderly and practical struggle against discrimination—the legalistic approach of white liberals and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The roots go back to the NAACP's fight in 1965 and 1966 in East St. Louis (as well as nationally) for employment opportunities on government projects, apparently promised by the 1965 Civil Rights Act. But the unions were practically adamant, the contractors fearful and the government unconcerned. A few, token victories came out of many tortuous meetings with unions and contractors, but a more significant development was the decision by a Negro educator and politician, Elmo J. Bush, to challenge the rule



of Alvin G. Fields, mayor of East St. Louis for 16 years and undisputed boss of the political machine that controls the city, the school system, and St. Clair County.

A blatant (and totally unnecessary) fraud was perpetrated in the municipal primary in 1967, in Negro precincts particularly, and the administration's tired, inept, and irresponsible rule was guaranteed for another four years. It was an election that was to haunt the white power structure, the business and professional class that united in a solid front behind the incumbents, who were manifestly inferior in virtually every way to the contending Negro candidates. The *Metro-East Journal*, a regional newspaper located in East St. Louis, endorsed Bush and two of his slate, and exposed voting fraud after the primary.

The fraud in that primary—including the voting of dead persons—was cited by a number of the young black militants at later times, when they began to indicate some interest in things political.

### Chart a New Direction

The resentment and frustration building in Negroes at the inertia of society and the failure of legislation and judicial decisions to offset the inertia was matched by a growing sophistication among young Negroes, who were beginning to quote Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael. There were stirrings of black nationalism. The nationalism was nurtured by the Experiment in Higher Education at Southern Illinois University's East St. Louis branch, and through the efforts of famed Negro dancer Katherine Dunham, artist in residence at SIU and director of the Performing Arts Training Center affiliated with the University.

Two related developments in the city were the creation of Project IMPACT (Innovative Methods of Progressive Action for Community Tranquility), a summer War-on-Poverty program, and the metamorphosis of a gang of young Negro delinquents through the efforts of two ministers of the Lutheran Church in America, and the Delinquency Study Project of Southern Illinois University.

The role of the Experiment in Higher Education in the black revolution in East St. Louis cannot be over emphasized. The program, initiated by Dr. Hyman Frankel in 1965, is a federally funded project in which under-achievers in high school, from poverty backgrounds, are given special, comprehensive college work for two years. The EHE students are about 95 per cent Negro, and their instructors and counselors are chiefly Negro. The curriculum is broad and the methods are freewheeling, and from the program are pouring the intellectual leaders of the revolution in East St. Louis. The young Negroes began to learn black history and leftist philosophy. They learned of Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, W. E. B. DuBois. They read Carmichael, McKissick, LeRoi Jones, and learned about such revolutionaries as Che Guevarra, Regis DeBray, Frantz Fanon.

And these young men brought their new learning, their new black awareness to Project IMPACT, which started in the summer of 1967 through the efforts mainly of Elmo Bush. The purpose of the project was to provide a recreational and cultural center for the city's rootless young—the dropouts, the hoodlums, the street corner hustlers—the kind of young Negro to whom violence is a fundamental part of life. Predictably, the mixture of these young people with the angry young intellectuals from the Experiment in

Higher Education was incendiary.

This revolutionary conversation was not missed by members of the Imperial War Lords, the gang of young Negroes who already had earned notoriety because violence in their neighborhood. Ranging in age from 12 to 16, members of the gang were hardened extortionists, thieves, knife fighters, gunmen. A Lutheran minister, the Rev. O. W. (Sonny) Goldenstein, worked tirelessly with the gang, trying to keep the boys out of trouble, trying to get them out of jail when they got "busted" by the police. They operated in the neighborhood of his church and he counselled them; he got the sociologists and criminologists of the SIU Delinquency Study Project interested in them; he took several of the leaders to Chicago and introduced them to the Blackstone Rangers, a notorious gang that had been able to get some of its energy directed into worthwhile self-help projects.

Goldenstein, a married man with two young sons, felt helpless to stop the inevitable violence that he believed was going to engulf the city, and he left to return to school at the end of the summer of 1967. He was replaced by a younger, single clergyman: the Rev. Keith Davis, who continued to work with the gang, preaching unity, social purpose, arguing against senseless violence.

The violence that had been predicted for East St. Louis since the urban riots began in 1963 finally came in August and September of 1967. The vicious riots in Newark and Detroit reverberated throughout the United States. East St. Louis was no exception. Carmichael had spoken in the city in March of 1967, just before the election. H. Rap Brown came in September of 1967, just after the Detroit blowup, when young Negroes all over the country wanted to have their own show. The night that Rap Brown left East St. Louis, the young militants had their own show.

### The Riot Comes

That the city had escaped the holocaust of a full scale riot was a source of never-ending wonder to those who know the city, its history, its racial tensions, its poverty, its despair. It is an ugly, decaying blot on the American Bottoms, across the river from an increasingly polished St. Louis riverfront that now includes the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, with Eero Saarinen's famous Arch. The city has about 83,000 people, 60 per cent of them Negro, and has an unemployment rate among Negroes of over 30 per cent. It is a squalid, sprawling slum, with a thin finger of population (the white escape route) groping hopefully toward the favored bluffs. The city, mired in near bankruptcy and spreading blight, is the product of misrule that attended its birth. Probably, no major city in the country has endured such uninterrupted official corruption for so long, or has witnessed so unholy an alliance between the official thieves and a corrupt, indifferent, exploitive economic class. The city's Negro population is in a kind of bondage to the political machine that probably has no parallel in the country, and the outmoded commission form of government has kept the Negro population without an effective or representative voice in the government. The first Negro commissioner was elected in 1963, and Negroes do not reach so high a station in the organization without mortgaging their souls to the machine, an essentially Irish-Catholic organization.

The city was over-ripe for violence when Rap Brown



*Alvin G. Fields, mayor of East St. Louis and "undisputed boss of the political machine."*



*Homer G. Randolph, once regarded as a "clown," saw his tactics for racial justice widely copied.*



*Arrested in 1963 in rights protest, Elmo J. Bush (leaning out of bus), urges bystanders to join in ride to police station. Later, he opposed Mayor Fields, and was endorsed by the local daily. After his defeat, voting frauds were exposed.*

spoke on September 10. Some arson had occurred late in August, and several persons were arrested, students from the Experiment in Higher Education among them. Most Negroes in the community—even those called "Uncle Toms" by the militants—agreed that police provoked the violence the night Brown left. The truth probably lies somewhere between the Negro and police versions. This much is clear: a large gathering of young people was being watched carefully by Negro policemen, and the officers were getting a steady stream of abuse from the crowd. A bottle was then thrown into the street—not at the police officers—and some white state troopers waded into the crowd with night sticks.

Generally, however, police conducted themselves with restraint, and the violence (never widespread or very destructive) ended in three days.

When the violence ended the meetings began, and unity and direction, the Scylla and Charybdis of the civil rights movement, were conspicuous by their absence. Repeatedly, meetings of young militants ended in bickering and frustration, but there were growing numbers of the young intellectual leaders who were preaching unity above all else. Black Culture Inc. was formed by some of the militants late in 1967. Its incorporators were Percy Smith, Charles Childress, Lafayette Johnson, Eddie Lee Davis, and Lyon Herbert. Such revolutionists as Raymond Sharp, Frank Bender, and the Price brothers, Bennie and Joel, were attracted to BCI, which promoted black culture well enough, but promoted unity and revolution with more determination. Members of the group were arrested periodically by police, and guns and ammunition were confiscated. Dynamite was found a time or two. (It was also used.) Characteristically, in one important raid East St. Louis police did not obtain a search warrant, and the charges filed were dropped. Police did get the guns, though.

Reports of the raids, and newspaper accounts (sensationalized occasionally) of incidents of violence that occurred sporadically in the city kept racial tension high. Gun sales to whites were (and are) setting records. The white community was nervous. White leaders responded to the vio-

lence by the formation of a crime control commission, which they insisted was a county-wide organization concerned with crime. Negro leaders called it a vigilante group. No Negroes were among the organizers of the commission, but several members of the Negro establishment were put on the board of directors. This action did not erase the suspicion among militant Negroes that the real purpose of the crime commission was to fight "crime in the streets."

### BEU Goes into Action

The crime commission was incorporated in March, its board of directors announced in April, just before the formation of the Black Economic Union. When the Union was formed a new name was added to police lists of Negro militants: Charles Koen, a 22-year-old resident of Cairo who emerged as spokesman for the Union and general apostle of the Black Revolution. The two East St. Louis members of the board of directors are Homer Randolph, bearded now and looking like a thin Jomo Kenyatta, and Walter Robinson, a seemingly mild and inoffensive employee of the War-on-Poverty agency in the city, a planner for the Model City Agency, and now an SIU staff member.

Koen is the coordinator for the Black Economic Union. A former ministerial student, he is a hard-core revolutionary. When he wears his rimless spectacles, he brings to mind history-book engravings of Robespierre. He won his civil rights spurs at the age of 16 in Cairo, the community of 9,500 at the southernmost tip of Illinois that is much more southern than Illinoisian. He still remembers "walking past that white swimming pool on the way to school." He also joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee during Carmichael's leadership, and participated in some of the southern marches. He worked briefly at the Breckenridge, Kentucky, Job Corps Center, and later set up the Illinois Migrant Council School at Cairo. He was a leader in the 1967 racial disorders at Cairo, and promises to be a leader in racial disorders all over Illinois this year.

Though the Black Economic Union announced that its first concern was the creation of cooperative food markets in the ghetto of each city in the Union, it seized upon the

school crisis in East St. Louis and eventually directed operations of the militants through Koen. The Union and Koen returned to their first concern after the school crisis. Koen was candid in his statement of how the Union expected to get the white man out of the ghetto and to get his money to finance black cooperatives.

"We can't be responsible for the cats out there in the street doing their thing," he said, letting his listeners draw the obvious conclusion that the Union can control the cats. It can, and it plans to make use of the kind of destructive guerilla warfare the young militants are adept at. This systematic use of terrorism is calculated to hasten the white exodus.

Whether the terrorism will result in "hush money" from the white community is quite another thing, though Koen and his colleagues are betting that the churches and foundations will pay. Whether business and industry will respond is problematical, and may depend in part on the strength of the Union and its control of the violence.

The first actual test of the Union was the school crisis, and Koen's performance lent weight to his argument that the Union exercised a measure of control and influence over the gangs, such as the Imperial War Lords. The crisis also indicated that the Union is more than a figment of Koen's imagination. At a strategy meeting called by the Union during the school crisis Koen served as spokesman for Black Culture Inc., IMPACT representatives, and the War Lords. There were Union representatives present from Peoria, Carbondale, Cairo, and St. Louis, and each promised help should it be required in East St. Louis.

The school problem developed out of unbelievably irresponsible conduct on the part of the District 189 school board, an historically corrupt, politically manipulated body. The board permitted an employee to set up a hot lunch program and refused to accept any responsibility for it. The program went broke and a number of women who had been hired to work in the program were left without jobs and without pay for a month they had worked. The women were organized by Leon Page, a community organizer with the Central City Organization, a project funded by the Episcopal Church, but the school board refused to discuss the matter of back pay for the women, who had retained a lawyer. The War Lords championed the cause of the women, and several of them reportedly were involved with a mob that roughed up the school board attorney after a bitter meeting in which the school board rejected pay demands. The War Lords added to the demands for pay new demands that the hot lunch program be reinstated and that three gang members expelled from school be readmitted.

The beating of the school board attorney occurred on April 23. On the same night a bomb was exploded outside one of the older schools in the district, and the word went out from the militants that no classes would be held until the school board agreed to their demands. The next day calls went to schools about bombs being planted in the buildings; a fire bomb was actually thrown into the auditorium of Lincoln High School, but it failed to ignite; militants boycotted classes and urged other students to join them. Lincoln High School closed, and the militants marched to Hughes-Quinn Junior High School (also an all-Negro school) and it was closed. The militants were transported to other schools in the district and principals, fearing violence, closed the buildings and dismissed students. A few windows

were broken and there were reports of students being beaten, but little actual physical violence was committed on persons.

Teachers from Lincoln High School met with the council and demanded police protection from the militants (which included members of BCI and the War Lords), and white parents held outraged sessions, demanding action by the school board and by police.

The school board called in state police to keep the schools open, but the militants succeeded in closing Lincoln High School and Hughes-Quinn on Thursday and Friday, too, April 25 and 26. The school board and city officials held frantic meetings, and white parents were demanding punitive action against the militants.

Koen, in Carbondale when the crisis erupted, returned to East St. Louis on April 25 and had control of the school situation as soon as he got back. He was the official spokesman for the militants at a tense Friday (April 26) meeting of the board, the militants and teachers from Lincoln High School. The teachers, in a remarkable turnabout, made common cause with the militants and submitted a list of more than 40 demands to the school board, ranging from a new high school and integration of faculty and students to what amounted to segregated schools with curricula geared to black nationalism.

"Boys," a tall Negro woman told the militants, "I don't mind telling you that you scared the daylights out of me; but you made me proud of you, too. You had more faith in me than I had in myself."

Whites attending the meeting, which was interrupted when the militants forced a school board member to order police to admit militants outside (including Koen) to the meeting, were left with the uncomfortable suspicion that the prevailing conviction of whites and many Negro leaders that the militants had no support among the middle-class Negroes needed re-examination. In point of fact, not a middle-class Negro voice was raised against the militants.

### The Meaning of Victory

The victory for the militants (and the Black Economic Union) was signal, if not complete. The school board paid the mothers more than \$10,000 in back wages, and agreed to study the possibility of reinstating the program. It dispatched painters to Lincoln High School immediately to begin a modest renovation program.

The Black Economic Union made a valuable point in demonstrating its ability to unify the militants and to influence opinion in the Negro community. The unity was real enough during the school crisis, but whether the Union could coordinate efforts so effectively in other areas is debatable. Keith Davis, who works primarily with the War Lords, believes that the unity of the militants functions at this point only on issues, not in philosophy, that there is still no unifying direction to the total revolution in East St. Louis.

This situation is fast changing. CORE director Floyd McKissick struck a responsive chord in the young militants when he spoke in East St. Louis just after the formation of the Black Economic Union. An intelligent, sophisticated leader, McKissick distilled the nationalism of the late Malcolm X and the black power of Stokely Carmichael into a reasonable and tangible program. Koen and the other young intellectual black revolutionaries in the city cite these three men as the fathers of the present black belliger-



## Late Developments in East St. Louis

In the weeks since this article was written, progress of various kinds has been in evidence — not all of it good. In general, however, black militants have the community stirring in encouraging ways.

There has not been significant financial aid forthcoming for the Black Economic Union, but the Union did inspire Negro Baptist ministers in East St. Louis to form a group to promote the development of a shopping center.

Federal grants have been made for several community action projects, including IMPACT, but most are for a short term and do not promise long-range hope for community improvement. An exception is the Concentrated Employment Program, which is expected to operate for two years, and should somewhat diminish unemployment in the East St. Louis ghetto.

Offsetting this improving economic picture is the continuing bleak racial outlook. Lyon Herbert was killed and Charles Childress (both founders of Black Culture, Inc.) was seriously injured in a clash with police in Chicago. They, along with two other BCI members, fled to Chicago after a gun battle with East St. Louis police. Charles Koen was sought by East St. Louis police when he failed to show up for his trial on a charge of obstructing police officers, but he eventually appeared several days after a warrant was issued.

Koen and his associates are directing their immediate attention to obtaining free time on radio station KATZ, KSTL, and KADI-FM, St. Louis stations with predominantly Negro audiences.

ence. The young gang leaders and group leaders, traditionally jealous of their prerogatives, seem to be listening more intently. The rest of the country—the black part of it anyway—also seems to be listening to what is going on in East St. Louis.

Dick Gregory, speaking at McKendree College in Lebanon, a small community about 20 miles from East St. Louis, talked briefly with some of the young militants from East St. Louis who came to hear his talk—which was given after the formation of the Black Economic Union, and after the school crisis.

"You cats have a hipper thing going for you in East St. Louis than we've got in Chicago," the comedian told the young men. "You can reach everyone down here." Gregory also hinted at the pressure the revolutionaries can bring on other black leaders. "We got us a thing going now," he said, "that means if we tell the black athlete he's going to boycott the Olympics, he'll boycott the Olympics." In elaborating, he said the nationalists' objections to the War in Vietnam were largely responsible for the absence of uniforms in the ghetto, where young black soldiers on leave traditionally always appeared in uniform.

Then, in the middle of May, a four-day national conference of young militant Negroes was held in East St. Louis. The delegates to the conference stayed over an extra day to attend a festival in East St. Louis in honor of Malcolm X. Delegates from as far away as California talked knowledge-

ably of events that had occurred just a few weeks earlier in East St. Louis.

## Change Comes to East St. Louis

There seems to be little doubt that East St. Louis is fast becoming a testing ground for the tactics of revolution. The city is small enough, it is ripe enough for change, and it has a Negro majority. Also, whites who have a major economic stake in the community do not live there, and are more willing to leave than they might be in a more self-contained community.

The militants are also much stronger in East St. Louis (and in other urban centers for that matter) than their numbers would seem to indicate. They have a substantial measure of control over the Model City Agency, and their colleagues are sprinkled throughout the ranks of the St. Clair County Economic Opportunity Commission, the War-on-Poverty Agency in the area. A number of them have city jobs. In addition to the militants' victory over the school board, they dictated the election of a Negro school board president, exercised strong influence in the school board elections to prevent the election of a white candidate backed by the organization, and they are taking aim on the jobs of several Negro political hacks who are precinct committeemen. They are after much more, the resignation of the police commissioner for a start.

In the area of economics the Black Economic Union has offered to buy out a white food store owner who decided to close after his business was damaged by arsonists, and received an offer to sell from another white market owner in the same area of the East St. Louis ghetto.

The use of terrorism to force out whites is leading to a hardening of attitudes on both sides. Whites speak of unleashing the police; militants speak of warfare; the editor of the *Journal* criticizes militants "who would divide the community." The city is already divided. The hand grenades only signalled the seriousness of the division. The militants have plenty more—even if they don't have the arsenal they hint at. What is more important, they are willing to use their weapons boldly.

The grenades did little damage April 26. There is some indication that they were intended to damage, not injure, except for the one thrown into the tavern. One other exploded at the Knights of Columbus building a block from the tavern. Another hit a car repair shop, another a truck dealer. One was thrown at the Scottish Rite Temple. It failed to explode and Army demolition experts took it apart. It was a practice hand grenade, hand-loaded and fused. Powder from rifle cartridges apparently was used for the charge.

Shortly after the incident of the grenades, a small group of concerned, liberal whites met to discuss what they might be able to do to prevent race warfare in the community. One Negro present, a young militant, told the whites that they could help by buying guns, "'cause you can get 'em easier than we can," he explained. "Get us some guns and then get out of the way."

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*Harold R. Piety, has recently left the Metro-East Journal to work on the campaign staff of Senator Paul Simon, candidate for lieutenant governor of Illinois.*

Success of New Deal coalition removed its goals and purpose / Kerner Report speeds disintegration of old liberal alliances / City Hall intent to wrest control of poverty programs from poor further divides Democrats / Currently, meaningful is not achievable, while the achievable is not meaningful / A new politics — such as McCarthy's candidacy cutting across traditional loyalties — is closest to finding a new majority.

# *Liberals Must Seek New Coalitions* / Jerome M. Mileur

Since early March, the public press has been crowded with comment on the report of the President's Commission on Urban Disorders. In this post-Freudian and all-too-cynical age, it is tempting to dismiss this outpouring as a national catharsis: a mass confession that is good for white souls but of little value to black pocketbooks. Cynicism aside, the deluge is perhaps more properly seen as a characteristically American crash effort to undo a century of mis- or non-education on the subjects of poverty and racism. Consequently, much that has been written about the findings and recommendations of the so-called Kerner Commission simply restates, underscores, and updates particular aspects of the report and then exhorts fellow Americans to believe. Except in an occasional and incidental way, almost nothing has been said about the political implications of the report.

This omission might be attributed to the obviousness of the political problems raised by the Kerner Commission. But, if public education is the purpose of the recent rash of writings—and since reiteration of the obvious often seems the essence of political pedagogy—some attention to the politics of the report seems wholly defensible. It seems *especially* defensible in the case of American liberals, for the political implications of the Kerner report are particularly poignant for liberalism. Above all else, implementation of the report appears most likely to speed the disintegration of the New Deal coalition, which has been the political vehicle of liberalism since the 1930's. The full and effective implementation of the report seemingly will require nothing less than the construction of a new liberal political majority in the nation.

"All American Politics," Samuel Lubell writes in *The Future of American Politics*, "are a politics of coalition—an incessant search for issues and appeals which will unite different groups of voters." Coalitions are the *deus* of the political *machina*, the "how" of who gets what when. They are the shifting alliances of partisan loyalties, personal friendships, group interests, and ideological commitments which underlie struggles over public policy. All political parties that aspire seriously to office seek just the right mix of these ingredients to assure victory and, once the winning formula has been found, parties seek a perpetual patent to it. *But success, rather than producing a more perfect union, spoils coalitions. It removes the goals which originally unified the various interests comprising the coalition and gives priority to new ones which frequently conflict and*

*emphasize differences among the old allies.* This is precisely what has been happening to the Roosevelt coalition in the two decades since World War II. Its successes have dramatized its failures, and the latter have been reshuffling liberal issues and loyalties. All successful coalitions eventually die of fratricide, and the Kerner report promises nothing so much as to escalate the current intramural battles among Democrats into open civil war.

The coalition forged by Franklin Roosevelt was a structure of convenience: a marriage of diverse interests whose energies could be harnessed in the common pursuit of a few jointly held economic goals. The critical elements in the coalition—those which became the *national* Democratic Party after 1938—were (1) trade unionists; (2) urban Americans and particularly the Negro, Jewish, and other ethnic minorities; and (3) university intellectuals. These groups coalesced briefly with the traditionally Democratic South to enact the social reform legislation which was the New Deal, but the differences among the elements of the Roosevelt coalition have become increasingly apparent as these programs have profited some while perpetuating others in a deepening poverty. Rifts in the Roosevelt majority between the beneficiaries and the bypassed of the New Deal and between the party's men of power and its idealists will be deepened by efforts to implement Kerner Commission proposals, just as they have been accentuated by Vietnam.

Two aspects of the Kerner report seem particularly destined to intensify conflicts within the old coalition: (1) the call for significant increases in federal spending for domestic programs, which means higher taxes or inflation, and (2) the emphasis upon greater participation for the poor in decisions affecting their lives, which means greater political influence and threatens established power structures in the nation's urban Democratic strongholds. The economics of the report is perhaps the more divisive aspect.

If the "striking political achievement" of the Roosevelt coalition was to unify the nation's poor, as the New Deal's chronicler Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. suggests, its striking social achievement has been to raise many economic have-nots to middle-class status. But the comforts of middle-class life, cast large by memories of the depression, have produced among the resurrected demands for greater economic security, rather than for more social reform. "More so than with any other segment of society," Lubell observes, "the political drive of this new middle class has been governed by the

desire to preserve its economic gains." As they have sought to avert economic reversals, the principal political interest of the beneficiaries of the New Deal has been to guard against both depression and inflation. Their conservatism was exemplified by a recent AFL-CIO study, which found taxes and the high cost of living to be by far the most important domestic problems to the labor federation's membership. The higher taxes and increased federal spending required to meet the price tag on the Kerner Commission report seem unlikely to excite support from trade unionists and others who arrived economically with the New Deal.

The economic aspects of the Kerner report, in themselves, then are calculated to cool the ardor of those for whom the New Deal had a payoff. An even chillier reception from the established and satisfied of the Roosevelt majority is in prospect for the "reforms" to be bought with higher taxes. Commission proposals for new approaches to housing, education, and jobs affront the new status of the new middle class. It is they who have most recently escaped city slums, who live on the edge of the ghetto and in low income suburbs, and thus it is they who are most threatened by open housing, busing of school children, and equal employment opportunities. It is also they who will inevitably lose power in city halls and local party organizations by an enlarged participation of the poor in local decision making. Moreover, it is they for whom social and political position is most important as symbols of their community identity and standing. *Thus, for the middle class born of the New Deal—largely urban, skilled, and white ethnic—implementation of the Kerner report is threatening economically, socially, politically, and perhaps most of all psychologically.*

The second aspect of the Commission's report—its call for a meaningful role for the poor in developing and executing programs affecting them—seems destined to incur the wrath of urban Democratic organizations, which, since the New Deal, have mobilized the party's tremendous majorities in the Nation's major cities (majorities comprised in large part of working-class white ethnics). Formerly engines for converting minority energies into political power, Democratic city machines in the past three decades have become the "establishment." They resist today's disestablished as they themselves formerly were resisted. John Donovan's analysis of the war on poverty suggests the probable reaction of city hall to any effort at enlarging the role of the poor in locally administered programs. In *The Politics of Poverty*, he notes that President Johnson's crusade against poverty sought the "maximum feasible" participation of the poor in planning, policy-making, and operation of its community action programs through, in Donovan's words, the "unprecedented use of federal funds and federal encouragement to arouse the poor against established political organization." *The response of big city mayors, especially Democrats, was to demand, pressure, and eventually wrest control of these programs from the poor and restore them to local politicians. There is no evidence that the Kerner Commission has altered this fact of contemporary American politics.*

Commission proposals for reforming federal welfare programs, like admission of the poor to power, promise to generate opposition from Democratic city organizations. Since the New Deal, these urban machines have been built largely on the "welfare industry" and the millions of dollars

from the federal government channeled through city hall to the poor. It seems improbable that these political organizations will yield any more meekly to changes in the content of these programs than they will to their administration. In sum, then, the Kerner report, in both its general thrusts and its specific policy proposals, seems likely to divide further the already divided Democrats.

Politically, the job now before the Commission's friends is twofold: (1) they must translate its recommendations into specific legislative and administrative programs and (2) they must win support for them. The dilemma faced is: if they design programs which the New Deal coalition will support, their proposals are unlikely to be effective in dealing with the problems; on the other hand, if they design programs adequate to the problems, the New Deal coalition is unlikely to provide the support necessary for passage. The frustration then is that, politically, the meaningful is not achievable, while the achievable is not meaningful.

For liberals, the clear political import of the Kerner Commission is that they can no longer leave it to labor and big city bosses. They can no longer rely upon George Meany, Mayor Daley, and other "men of the past," as James Reston has called them, to champion the changes in American society necessary for the realization of excellence and justice for all. *They must seek new and more natural alliances irrespective of party, for as the issues of liberalism have changed, so too have the supporters.* In what pollster Louis Harris calls, "Karl Marx, upside down," it is now the wealthier and longer educated who have become the principal supporters of liberal programs and the poor, especially among the white population, who now resist change most adamantly. New liberals require new coalitions and, presently, the hope for a new liberal majority seems to lie in uniting the "alive" elements of the Roosevelt coalition (Negroes, social-conscience unionists, and intellectuals) with the progressive elements of the Republican Party (upper-status professionals, managers, and technicians)—and in hitching both to the spirited idealism and energy of the nation's youth.

The dilemma of Democratic and Republican liberal alike is to sort out the elements of his party's present coalition, discarding the tired and building upon the vigorous. Indeed, the historical significance of this year's presidential primaries may lie in the fact that liberals in both parties have begun this realignment of issues and forces. And the enigmatic quality in Eugene McCarthy's candidacy may lie in his having done it best. Certainly, he, of all the major candidates, has been most successful in cutting across traditional loyalties to appeal to progressives in both parties. Moreover, it is McCarthy who seems to sense best the historic moment, as when he told an Indiana audience, "There is a new arrival in United States politics, the politics of conscience, the politics of participation, the willingness to use reason and knowledge to give direction to life in history." The effective implementation of the Kerner report, as well as the political viability of American liberalism, requires nothing less than a new majority, a new coalition, a new arrival.

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Jerome M. Mileur is a research associate and instructor in the Department of Government, University of Michigan.



# Offers Chicago A Sense of Discovery / John S. Blades

One of Chicago's most-often-quoted bromides, first uttered by Daniel Burnham at the unveiling of his "city beautiful" project 70 years ago, urges its citizenry to "Make no little plans." The advice has since been repeated with such frequency, by people in high places and low, that it is in danger of becoming *the* Chicago cliché. Yet the words, unlike those of most clichés, are not necessarily empty ones. Chicagoans do have a reputation for making no little plans. And no one, perhaps, has drawn them on a more grandiose scale than Bob Sickinger.

Sickinger is artistic director of the Hull House Theater. It is his announced aim to see the city with nothing less than a legitimate theater on *every* block. Theater would become a community affair, with residents of neighborhoods, particularly lower-income ones, not only attending performances but acting in them and pitching in on the production. Sickinger would make it almost as easy for people to get to a community theater as it now is to walk across the living room and switch on the television.

Such a fantastic notion might suggest that Sickinger is, to put it mildly, not a very practical man. But, in fact, he has taken a few good-sized strides toward that theatrical utopia: under his supervision, Hull House has opened five neighborhood theaters in four years and has another in the building stages. "We will have built six theaters in five years," Sickinger says, "so why *couldn't* there be a thousand in 50 years? I'm not saying we're going to do it all. We're just showing the way — for churches, for community centers, for the city. They can pick up what we're doing and follow in our footsteps."

They will be big footsteps in which to follow, for Sickinger, a genius with apparently inexhaustible reserves of energy, has done more, say his legion of enthusiastic supporters, to enrich Chicago's theatrical life during his four years in the city than anyone else. One of his most ardent admirers, in a fulsome burst of praise that probably embarrassed even Sickinger (and he is not a modest man), described him as the "John the Baptist of Chicago theater." A John the Baptist he may not be, but few would deny that Sickinger has plunged ahead with a religious passion, giving

theatergoers—at least those who appreciate his controversial kind of contemporary drama—some of their finest hours.

Not the least remarkable thing about the Hull House theater program is that it is an almost wholly amateur operation, though the term amateur does not apply here in the ordinary sense. With a paid staff of only six others, Sickinger directs an unpaid cast of thousands—approximately 3,000 volunteers who do everything from acting to building scenery to selling tickets (and it is not uncommon for one person to perform all three chores). His annual budget of \$150,000 is one that many a professional troupe might envy. And Hull House productions, or those directed by Sickinger anyway, reach a level in staging and acting that few professional companies can match, the Broadway road companies that play downtown included.

## Nation's Largest Stage Organization

In the recent past, Chicago has had, with a few exceptions, very little to boast about, theatrically speaking. The downtown playhouses are mostly outposts for Broadway retreads. The hinterlands are full of lightweight dinner theaters in which the productions—mainly comedies and musical comedies, retreads of Broadway retreads—aim no higher, and accomplish no more, than providing a mediocre "dessert" to a mediocre meal. Here, the menu is as much the thing as the play, and neither is really very satisfying.

But in 1964, Hull House, the social-work agency founded by the legendary Jane Addams, stepped in to fill this dramatic void by reactivating its long-dormant theater program. Paul Jans, director of Hull House, paged Sickinger in his native Philadelphia, where the two men had worked together in settlement houses, and asked him to head Hull House Theater. Sickinger had taught in junior high schools in Philadelphia while organizing and directing four community theaters, with brief sabbaticals to New York where he studied under directors Jose Quintero and Alan Schneider. The summons from Jans gave Sickinger the opportunity he had long sought: to chuck his teaching job and apply his generous talents full time to the theater.



*Robert Sickinger*

Since Sickinger's arrival, Hull House, according to local statistics keepers, has become the nation's largest stage production organization, reportedly using more actors and staging more plays than any other group in the country.

Included in its domain are the Parkway Theater, a forum for "angry black playwrights" on the predominantly Negro South Side; a Touring Theater that is expected to play 3,000 road engagements this year, and a newly opened Underground Theater, so called because it is in the basement of a Negro public housing high-rise. A \$30,000 grant from the National Council on the Arts—the first ever given a Chicago theatrical group—has, with a matching sum from Hull House, aided in the enlargement of its summer camp theater in East Troy, Wisconsin, and contributed to the construction of the Uptown Theater, which is a showcase for sophisticated musicals in an area densely populated with Appalachian emigres.

The core of this activity, however, is found in a theater on Broadway, ironically the only playhouse on this North Side street. The 3200 block of Broadway, like outlying parts of so many other Chicago mainstems, is a down-trodden, rubbish-strewn sector, full of color, clatter, and confusion. Amid this urban disarray, surrounded by drug stores and laundromats, by pseudo-supermarkets and cut-rate clothing stores, sits the Jane Addams Center, a brick settlement house that resembles a church without any religious adornments. Inside, the small, 140-seat theater seems, despite its newness, aged and rundown, its cavernous gloom brightened only by a red carpet leading to two rows of red balcony seats. It is here, in backstage headquarters, that William Robert Sickinger presides over what is fast becoming a theatrical empire, albeit an "amateur" one.

The irony of the Jane Addams Theater's location—on Broadway—is sharpened by the plays that are staged there, almost all of them of the *off*-Broadway genre. Among the playwrights and their works that Sickinger has introduced to Chicago audiences have been Edward Albee, with "An American Dream," and "Tiny Alice;" Jack Gelber, with "The Connection;" LeRoi Jones, with "Dutchman;" and

Frank Gilroy, with "Who'll Save the Plowboy?" The characters of Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco are also habitués of the Hull House boards. Without Sickinger & Company, it is questionable whether many of them would otherwise have been produced locally.

Moreover, these works are staged with such guts and gusto, style and frenzy—a reflection of the near-manic pace that Sickinger sets for himself—that audience, playwright, and critic alike have been, for the most part, unreserved with their hosannas. Kenneth Brown, author of "The Brig," thought the Hull House production of his play superior to the one it received in New York. One local arbiter of the arts commented, "Each of Sickinger's productions has had a sense of discovery about it, not only because the play was new and impressive . . . but also because the amateur actors delivered great bursts of creative acting that brought fresh, sudden surprise and delight to an audience."

A good many of the Hull House plays fall into the category of Theater of the Absurd, which is, in turn, an up-to-date label for the avant-garde. Sickinger prefers to call them "modern" works. Similarly, "now" seems to be the single most important word in his vocabulary. He explains:

"We want our audiences to know what's happening right now. In this respect, our plays are modern, not avant-garde. In fact, a lot of the plays called avant-garde are not really as avant-garde as people think. Beckett, for instance, is a modern playwright who's steeped in the classics. So is Ionesco. The world they set their plays in may be avant-garde but their themes are classic, the same themes that Shakespeare and Moliere were concerned with.

"The chief reason why I do modern plays, though, is because they were written by writers who are alive. They are the ones who should be getting the royalties, not the estates of the ones who are dead. What would have happened to Shakespeare and Moliere if they had only produced plays written 500 years before *they* were born?

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### **Pain and the Living**

Though the critics have been exceedingly charitable, there have been occasional rumblings of unrest. Not long ago, a reviewer made a New Year's wish in print—"That Hull House give us a happy play sometime soon . . . Not insignificant but happy . . . At Hull House all has been pain and grief and hopelessness." And in a community where there is presumably too much pain and grief and hopelessness already, he went on to ask, should the people have to experience more—someone else's?

Sickinger had a handy reply to this criticism. "The modern playwright doesn't make things pretty. His message is that there's no escape from pain. I want the plays I do to have depth and meaning. This makes people think. When you assault them you make them curious. I want to hit my audience directly, no pussyfooting, no subterfuge . . . I'm only interested in doing plays that haven't been done elsewhere in Chicago. The happy plays are abundant in theaters all over the city."

A writer whose work is presented at Hull House receives \$1,000 for a 15-week run. Because of the peripheral noises in the theater during the week—from the basketball court overhead, and the swimming pool below—performances are held on only three nights, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, when these other settlement house activities are curtailed.

Thus far, most of the plays produced at the Jane Addams Theater have been imported ones, written by non-Chicago playwrights. Sickinger, however, hopes to stage more Chicago-written plays, and toward this end Hull House has formed a writer's workshop, which meets every Sunday evening.

The batting average for this enterprise, on paper anyway, has been less than spectacular during the three years of its existence. Only one play by a workshop writer—"Kid's Games," a one-acter by Allan Bates—has been produced on the Jane Addams stage, and it was on a program of short plays by Pirandello and Ionesco. Workshop plays, however, have been staged at other Hull House theaters, including many at the workshop itself, and two have been taped for showing by a local educational television channel.

Sickinger feels the workshop has more than demonstrated its worth already. The fledgling writers' plays are read by actors at the Sunday sessions, then probed and discussed by the workshop directors and other members of the class, affording them an invaluable, and otherwise unobtainable, avenue of criticism. "The important thing is that people meet there who want to write," Sickinger says, "and they are encouraged to continue writing, even though they may not be successful. It shows somebody is interested in them. And as they write, they get better and better. There have been a lot of good plays written that could play on the Jane Addams stage now, except that I haven't had time to produce them," (If there is reason for a little skepticism here, it is because a recent Hull House production, "The Typists" and "The Tiger," a pair of one-acters by Murray Schisgal, had been presented before, the first time Sickinger has repeated a show.) Sickinger is confident that the workshop will one day turn out a writer of its own, one who will attain the stature of Albee.

For someone with so many other talents, it comes as a mild surprise to learn that Sickinger himself is not a writer, not even an aspiring one. Essentially, he is a director, but his position as a theatrical empire-builder has thrust him into many other roles, few of them wanted. He must, of necessity, be part Barnum and part Blackstone, a social worker, psychologist, scenery designer, construction foreman, financial wizard, and fundraiser. All of these satellite functions fall rather uncomfortably under the umbrella of Hull House "administrative" duties. "I have to be a good administrator," Sickinger says, a little ruefully, "so I can direct."

Sickinger is refreshingly free of the limp histrionic flourishes that seem to afflict so many others who gravitate to The Theater. He does not always seem firmly anchored to

earth as he rushes about, sometimes in a state approaching semi-frenzy, working 80 and more hours a week to accomplish just some of the enormous task he has set out to do. At 41, he is maybe 20 pounds overweight; his dark hair badly thinning, and he wears it long at the back and over the collar, as though to compensate for what he lacks on top. He is blunt, profane, and when he smiles—which is rarely—it is through clenched teeth. His face is not handsome but it has that thick, lumpy-potato look that distinguishes many of Hollywood's most memorable character actors, the types that always seemed to be lurking in the shadows over George Raft's shoulder. (He has, in fact, acted in one movie, playing a policeman in the made-in-Chicago "Mickey One.")

Sickinger's attachment to the theater is almost hermetic. Seven days a week he works from noon til midnight, and beyond. What spare time he has away from the theater is necessarily spent in reading new plays and keeping abreast of what's happening in the stage world. His theater life so overlaps his family life that it is nearly impossible to distinguish between the two, if there is any distinction at all. His wife Selma is his chief *aide-de-camp* a paid member of his staff who is fully competent to handle his chores should he be temporarily called away on another project. His daughters, Denise, eleven years old, and Robin, nine, had roles in one of this season's plays.

Of the Hull House budget, 90 per cent comes from ticket sales, Sickinger estimates. For the rest it is dependent on donations, which he actively helps seek. One notable fundraising device has been the Chamber Theater. For a fee of \$200, a crew of Hull House performers will go to a private home, where they will read all or part of a play. Afterwards, the drama is dissected and explained to the audience, sometimes with the assistance of a psychiatrist who is brought along if the work has profound psychological and symbolic undertones.

When Sickinger came to Hull House he was given an artistic *carte blanche* to select the plays he wanted, no matter how controversial, and do them in the manner he wanted to do them, a rather daring gesture on the part of a settlement house in a low-income community. Among this season's productions, for example, was "Fortune and Men's Eyes," the John Herbert play about homosexuality in prison. That he has been able to present his no-themes-barred brand of theater while drawing sell-out crowds—this year the list of subscribers hit a high-water mark of 6,000—is no small testament to his success.

Still, while the demands of commerce are nowhere near as great as they are, say, on the producer of a drama that plays in the Loop, Sickinger is not totally un beholden to the box office. The bizarre, mystifying plays of Samuel Beckett so taxed his audiences' threshold for the Theater of the Absurd that a small-scale revolt among subscribers forced him to declare a moratorium, however temporary, on the French playwright's works (it was a minor concession, nonetheless, since he had done most of Beckett anyway).

### Are the Poor Slighted?

To Sickinger, theater today is too often subsidized by the rich, for the rich. The poor should be able to share in theatrical experiences, too, he feels. "They should have a theater in their neighborhood where they would pay only



token admissions." This has been Hull House's central goal, and without doubt it is a noble one. But there have been nagging questions—not often voiced—about how well Sickinger has been living up to this obligation, at the Jane Addams Theater at least. Ticket prices there—\$3.40 to \$4.40—nearly approximate those of a downtown playhouse, which prices the poor out of the theater. The subscription list is heavily laden with affluent patrons from the Gold Coast and North Shore, as indeed it must be with admission that high. In addition, the plays—cerebral, frequently complex and murky, few of them entertaining for the sake of pure entertainment—are not the sort to attract residents of the Broadway area, impoverished intellectually as well as financially.

*Chicago Sun-Times* drama critic Glenna Syse, always a Sickinger booster, held a similar reservation. "He is a man obsessed with the theater," she says, "particularly that which is new and challenging. He is competitive, dedicated, ingenious and skillful at imparting his zest to those who work with him. But he has a limitation—and that is that his taste is not catholic. Sometimes the intensity of his interest in one direction blurs his vision in other areas. The Hull House role is to engage the community, and he has engaged only a portion of it because of the narrowness of his vision."

Such misgivings do not appear to trouble Sickinger. He notes that community nights, or previews, are held at the Jane Addams Theater before each new play, and people from the area are invited to attend at greatly reduced admissions. "We believe they should pay something," he says, "because people have more respect for things that they have to pay for. Many of them can afford big cars and television sets, so they can afford the theater. The price really shouldn't have that much to do with it, though. The important thing is availability. The theater must be nearby, so that people can come to know the theater and come to love it." Profits from the Jane Addams Theater, he also points out, help sustain operations at other neighborhood theaters, where admissions are lower and the poor are better represented in the audiences.

Hull House's grassroots theater program is best demonstrated, perhaps, at the Underground Theater, where Gerald Wallace, a 30-year-old product of the writer's workshop, directs and produces plays for the Negro community. The theater-basement, which the city rents to Hull House for a penny a year, opened in January 1967 to miniscule audiences. Attendance has since risen to the point where all of the 75 seats priced at \$1.50 are occasionally sold out for a performance.

Wallace has enlisted his Negro neighbors as actors, set builders, and ticket salesmen, among other things. While all the plays have been Wallace originals, he soon hopes to produce works by well-known authors, like Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge" (in which the Italian principals would be transformed into West Indians), and, ultimately, some originals by writers developed in the area.

For many of the Negroes who attend, it is their first experience in a legitimate theater. This, then, is truly theater for the underprivileged, fulfilling the aim of Hull House. There are plans to open more and more of these playhouses in public housing basements until eventually (and idealistically) there is one in every housing project in Chicago.

To accomplish this, Sickinger will need a lot of assist-

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ance, mostly financial. And he insists that the bulk of this money should come from the city, through grants from City Hall and donations from the community at-large. "The city should give us money to establish a *professional* theater," he says. "We could set up a very good one for a half a million dollars. A lot of other major cities have them, but not Chicago. Until we have a professional theater, I can't keep actors here. The talent and desire are in the city. The problem is to keep it and nourish it. But all the talent is leaving. I've had 20 good actors go to New York."

"But this is really the city's problem, not mine. I'm always training more talented people. It's the city's problem because it's not keeping them here. They're just letting them go. It shows you how much they think of them."

### Chicago Stay Indefinite

As committed as he is to Chicago and Hull House, Sickinger would like someday to direct a play in New York, not an off-Broadway play since he feels he is doing plays better now than they are done off Broadway, but a big-budget production *on* Broadway. Nobody, however, has yet offered him one, and he refuses to go to New York job hunting. His ultimate dream, somewhat astonishingly for someone so involved in the theater, is to direct movies. He has been a casting director for one movie, "David and Lisa," directed three plays for television, and has plans for two feature-length films. The first of these — an adaption of John Hersey's "The Child Buyer," staged at Hull House two seasons ago — will begin filming later this year.

"The only reason I got into the theater in the first place," he says, "was because I wanted to make movies but couldn't because I wanted to start at the top. I'm a qualified director of films, it's just that nobody knows it yet. I'm not interested in underground films, where you poke a camera around a corner, I want to do things right, with plenty of money and an experienced cameraman and screen writer. If somebody offered me 'Son of Dracula' or 'Winnie the Pooh' with the proper budget, I'd do it."

It seems inevitable, then, that Hull House, and Chicago, will someday lose Sickinger to either Broadway or Hollywood, but in the meantime he will go right on bringing to Chicago some of the best, and most disturbing works the contemporary — no, the modern theater has to offer, choosing them and staging them with regard to no one's likes and dislikes but his own. And if what he happens to like is what his audiences, too, like, or learn to like, then so much the better for them, for the community, for the whole city.

John S. Blades is on the staff of Midwest magazine of the Chicago Sun-Times as an editor and writer.

**THE POET DIES  
AND IS REBORN ON THE PRAIRIE/  
Dave Etter**

*O prairie mother, I am one of your boys.*  
— CARL SANDBURG

1.

Autumn: A heaven of clouds catches fire  
above this harvested body  
where once stood blond wheat and corn.

He sleeps and dreams, simple as a child,  
complete as star or stone.

2.

Winter: A full and orange and sailing moon.  
Owl screech. Wing shadows on snow silence.

3.

Spring: Moist sun stirs the seeded earth.  
New winds, greener than young willows,  
bend leaves of whispering grass  
over these good Illinois bones.

4.

Summer: And he is a prairie boy again,  
tramping the dusty cow-fringed roads,  
whistling among bees in clover fields,  
wandering in woods of pine and oak,  
fishing lazy-like for perch or catfish,  
in love with the River King's daughter  
who rolls him now in blue flowers.

**NORTHERN SPRING /Dave Etter**

1.

Surrounded by gamy dogs  
and flowers with wrong names,  
the elm tree stump  
grows a head of grizzly hair.

2.

Lean sparrows, blue poker chips,  
explode in a hedge of sticks.

3.

The junkman bells his brown horse.

DAVE ETTER is assistant editor of Encyclopaedia Britannica. Seven of his poems which first appeared in FOCUS/Midwest, were included in a collection of his poems published by the University of Nebraska Press. DORA M. PETTINELLA writes poetry in English and Italian and translates from the Spanish, Portuguese, and French. She has appeared in FOCUS/Midwest.

**IN WINTER SLEEP / Dave Etter**

Last leaves, pine cones, snowflakes, blown feathers  
fall over the shallow graves of antelope.

From an iron-gray lake, wild geese fly south  
across the deep prairies of a hunter's moon.

**THE ALBATROSS / Charles Baudelaire**  
Translated from the French by DORA M. PETTINELLA

Often, in fun, the crewmen will  
Capture the albatross, vast ocean birds,  
Indolent companions of travelers who follow  
The vessel gliding over bitter deeps.

These blue sky emperors, when laid out  
On deck, confused, grotesque,  
Let their grand white wings flop down  
And pitifully drag by their sides.

This winged boyager, how awkwardly he flies!  
Lately so handsome, how homely and droll!  
One pokes his beak with a pipe-stem,  
Another, limping, mimics the flying victim!

The Poet resembles this prince of clouds  
Who seeks the storm mocking the archer;  
Banished on land, amid hue and cry,  
His giant wings forbidding him to walk.

This winged voyager, how awkwardly he flies!

**THE JOYOUS DEAD / Charles Baudelaire**  
Translated from the French by DORA M. PETTINELLA

On rich soil thick with snails  
I wish to dig myself a hollow ditch,  
Where I may stretch my old bones at ease,  
Sleep in forgetfulness like a shark in waves.

I hate testaments and tombs;  
Rather than beg a tear from the world;  
I'd rather call the crows while living  
And leave them peck this filthy corpse.

O worms! Black companions without ears or eyes,  
This free and joyous dead comes toward you;  
Rejoicing philosophers, sons of rot,

Leave alone my ruins, without qualms,  
Tell me if there is another torment  
For this old soulless body, dead among the dead!

## *Castles, Cakes and Uniforms* / Ruth Berges

Most memorable among events of my early childhood are the summer vacations. Life at home throughout the year with its mildly modulating variations was comparable to being couched continuously in the soft fluffy featherbed that covered me at night. A fall—a realization or intimation of the adult world beyond mine—would inevitably plunge me back without much damage into the familiar enveloping downy warmth.

The important events that burst into everyday life managed to be joyous and welcome, like my third birthday when I awoke to find the longed-for tricycle standing next to my crib, or half a year later the wondrous, somewhat puzzling arrival of a baby sister.

Summer vacations were different. The well-known shapes and colors of home, the accustomed daily routine—all of which in memory's realm have blurred into fuzzy contours and pleasantly hazy sensations—were abruptly abandoned for the seashore. We traditionally spent summers at Travemuende. It had been my paternal grandparents' favorite vacation resort, close enough to their home in Luebeck to attract them several times during the year.

The distance from Hamburg was greater, but considering that the train-ride took no more than ninety minutes, the city remained conveniently close. A house or apartment was rented for four to six weeks, and the joys of spending day after day outside and at the beach began.

I loved the water but preferred looking at it from a distance. Though I didn't mind splashing around with my feet and legs, I intensely disliked getting really wet and having a cold clammy bathing suit cling to my body. I liked to stand on the firm wet sand, and let the gently rippling

tepid waves wash over my feet. The sand would give way under my feet, my heels sink into the ground. I would step aside on firmer ground to start the game all over again.

I loved building elaborate castles with turrets and moats or tunnels in the sand, often with my cousins who also spent summer vacations at the seashore. One could walk for miles along the red brick wall that began where the sand ended. It was built flat first, like a sidewalk, then curved gently upward and finally rose steeply into the wall that met the boardwalk above. For some reason, ladybugs were attracted to the hot, evenly spaced bricks. I liked them but only as long as they sat still, crawled and did not fly. As a precaution I collected them in little wooden match or cigar boxes of which my mother from time to time silently disposed. It did not matter; there were always more. Besides, many other things kept me occupied, like playing ball, doing exercises, collecting shells of various shapes and many-colored stones polished smooth by the water, or just peering at the distant horizon and watching ships approach, wondering if they would sail by or up the Trave River into the harbor. My father joined us for long weekends. He was a good swimmer. When he held my hand, I even ventured out a little further into the water, forgetting the unpleasant shivery sensation of getting wet.

Sometimes in the afternoons we wandered through woods and fields where the air was fragrant with pine or camomile. My mother picked wild strawberries and chanterelles. Once, when stung by a bee, my fear of insects was justified. It was the only frightening and painful memory that persisted of those lovely distant childhood summers.

We usually went out to Travemuende on a Sunday in spring to arrange our summer stay. The ominous printed



signs on windows and doors seemed to appear about the time I was learning to read. Though so politely worded, the brief message was unmistakably forthright and cruel. First the forbidding signs were few and scattered, but each season they increased in alarming numbers: "Jews are not welcome," or "Jews are not desired."

The notices gave leisurely, peaceful Travemuende a menacingly aggressive look, in spite of all its natural beauty and its many famed and fashionable summer visitors. I couldn't quite understand why we were the undesirables, the outcasts to be excluded. Yet the fact remained that we were stigmatized. Thus, though my parents continued to hope that "times would change," they decided that we spend the summer just after my sixth birthday in Denmark.

We traveled north with a cousin, and her three boys who had sometimes been our companions at the Baltic resort. Rolf was seven, Gert and I were the same age, my sister Hanni and Jack had passed their second birthday. My parents had chosen Aarhus in Jutland for our vacation. An apartment to accommodate the two families had been rented. My mother and Tante Erna decided to do their own cooking except for the main meal, which the landlady catered to us. This left our mothers free to spend long hours with us at the beach.

Strangely enough, my impression of the sand and sea in Denmark are dim. It was a beautiful, carefree summer, and I recall that often Danish acquaintances would incredulously ask my mother why she wanted to return to Germany, to the Nazis. Why not stay in free, happy, affluent Denmark? My mother would smile, looking beautiful with her dark eyes and almost black hair, her face deeply tanned, her fine even teeth gleaming white. She wore large dangling earrings that summer, thin, delicately shaped circles of tortoise shell. No doubt she was thinking—faintly worried at those moments, as I was—of my father back in Germany. It was too far to visit us over weekends. Having never been without him for so long, we missed him.

I retained only vague images of the beach in later years. It was the seashore at Travemuende that always came to mind—vividly, with all its detail. It lingered as a joyous bright experience, eagerly anticipated and repeated every year. Denmark, in contrast, I would have chosen as a solitary, outstanding event. The Danish people were friendly and cheerful; they spoke a strangely musical funny language of which I was soon able to pick up some phrases. Walking to the beach each morning became tedious; I was impatient to arrive. The long walk home later when I was tired from the sun, water and vigorous sea breeze proved even worse.

While the pleasant hours spent with my sister and cousins playing in the sand and water passed uneventfully, several other adventures classified this summer as especially memorable. For one thing, living together with the boys, the older ones in particular, provided constant crises. One day Rolf fell from his bicycle, spraining his ankle. Another time Rolf and Gert became violently ill after secretly having gorged themselves on hard green plums. I was astounded at how many scrapes boys could get into. Yet I knew they were not bad boys.

My mother, too, had her share of troubles. One morning, in the primitive kitchen with its old-fashioned kerosene stove, her apron caught fire. Instantaneously, the flames seemed to lick her body. I was too stunned to move or even scream. Tante Erna possessed the presence of mind to grasp a blanket, push my mother to the ground and smother the

flames. My mother escaped unhurt.

In the afternoons we visited interesting sights or beautiful parks. Once I was thrilled to catch a glimpse of the king—mainly his legs and feet because a screen of flowering bushes obscured him—wandering in the garden of the Amalienborg. My cousins and I, accustomed to German *ersatz*, were old enough to appreciate the abundant and delicious Danish food, especially the rich double ice cream pops coated with crisp, paper-thin chocolate. Or in the cafes the pastries topped with mounds of whipped cream! Our mothers were more impressed by the fresh butter and eggs, fine quality meats and aromatic morning and afternoon coffee. There was nothing like it in Hitler's Germany.

One afternoon, even the little ones, Hanni and Jack, discovered the wealth of gustatory pleasures offered by a Danish bakery. The older boys had remained outside. In the crowded shop our mothers were quite absorbed in trying to choose a variety of pastries to take along on an afternoon outing. I was busy admiring the cakes and cookies as well. How appetizing and pretty they looked, with dainty colored sugar or chocolate sprinkles resting lightly on clouds of whipped cream. Designs of delicately curled and frilled chocolate or buttercream decorated square and oblong sugar-coated pink and yellow petit-fours. Colorful fruit tortes seemed too perfect to be real. In fact, all these artistically prepared delicacies appeared too beautiful to be carelessly destroyed by munching of harsh teeth and swallowing of greedy mouths. Yet some women were already devouring their purchases and smacking their lips before they had left the shop.

I turned around to look at Hanni and Jack. They had disappeared. I edged back from the counter and toward the door. No, there they were, after all, very much so, but disconcertingly quiet. Standing at the window display, each was deeply engrossed in attacking a large, layered fruit torte, which had once been elaborately decorated with whipped cream, chocolate shavings and luscious whole strawberries. The tortes were partly eaten, but mostly smeared over the children's hands, faces and freshly starched playsuits. They might have been at the beach, playing in the sand, only this was much better, the real thing that could be eaten.

What a sight they were! I wanted to laugh but immediately caught myself. Quickly I returned to my mother's side and urgently poked her in the ribs. She and Tante Erna at once understood my silent language. My mother's expression was one of comic horror. My aunt was ready to shout but stopped herself in time. Within seconds both rushed over to the window, unceremoniously grabbed their children's multicolored-stained hands and eased themselves out of the door. Their mouths filled with cake, the children fortunately did not have a chance to resist by means of their vocal chords. I followed closely behind.

Outside Rolf and Gert shouted with gleeful laughter at their appearance and the consternation of our mothers. We dared not look back at the destruction wrought in the bakery's magnificent window display though Rolf and Gert were eager to survey the damage. But this time a stern look from their mother's round black eyes and a reprimand from her compressed thin-lipped and pursed mouth proved completely effective.

"Shouldn't we at least go back and pay for the cake?" my mother suggested timidly, but Tante Erna, marching away, emphatically shook her head. I left Aarhus that sum-

mer tanned and happy and bursting with adventures about which I must tell my father. The husbands had decided to meet their families in the first German town so that we might all travel home together. For the present, without the men, the seven of us comfortably shared a compartment on the train. The older boys and I played games; Hanni and Jack alternated between being sleepy and wanting to be entertained. I enjoyed looking out of the window, watching the harmonious yet ever-changing landscape pass by. Sometimes I took my crayons and drawing pad and tried to draw trees or houses that impressed me. I didn't bother about the many cows because I wasn't good at animals.

At the Danish-German border, we clamored for our favorite Danish ice cream. There was a stop of several minutes; my mother left the compartment to buy it for us—for the last time. Watching at the window, I was about to call and wave to her, but checked my voice when I saw a tall, black-uniformed young man approach her. The sudden appearance of the darkly menacing, precisely cut SS uniform, whose wearers I had learned to fear, paralyzed me. In the past few weeks I had forgotten they existed. Above the rapid pounding of my heart, I could hear the SS man addressing my mother. At that moment I was acutely aware that she was in danger. Why, I could not have explained. The man, or what one could see of his face under the stiff, streamlined cap, hardly looked dangerous: dark eyes and features sharply chiseled. He smiled showing his even white teeth. Yet I was horribly afraid.

"Would you like to join me for a beer?" he accosted my mother. Though the voice was friendly, it definitely ruled out a negative response. It was a harsh intrusion into my private, serene world.

"I am with some children," my mother falteringly replied, pointing to the other end of the long train.

I was dumbfounded. My mother could tell a lie! The only time I had ever lied was after I had used a medicine dropper to squirt nosedrops on my canary. I had determined to aim at the top of his head just once and was angry that he would not sit still. Again and again I missed. Finally, drenched with the medicine, Haensch became sick, and I spent a miserably night before I confessed to my father. The next day he told me that he had given the bird his freedom, though I suspected silently and unhappily that something terrible had happened to him.

My mother's lie must have been different, for my fear partially gave way to intense pride.

"I have to buy them some ice cream," she concluded and was about to walk the few steps to the ice cream cart. Swiftly the man stepped in front of her.

"Are you Italian?" he asked ingratiatingly with his excessively familiar grin, which in my eyes had turned into a detestable, sinister grimace.

He appraised her dark hair, bronzed face, her arms and even her legs. It was an outrage on the part of this brazen, frightening stranger to stare at my mother. Tears came to my eyes.

"No," my mother replied with finality, then as an afterthought added, "my mother was Italian."

Another lie, I counted. Rolf and Gert, who had been running through the passage, came bursting in loudly. Their mother warningly placed a finger against her lips.

"Don't attract attention," she whispered to them, pointing out of the window, yet holding them back. At the sight of the black uniform, they understood.

"I must go now," my mother said firmly.

"There's no rush," the officer insisted as calmly as before. "You can have a drink with me and take a later train."

"I'll bring the ice cream to the children and then come back," my shy mother boldly suggested.

He continued to smile and nodded in agreement.

"I'll wait," he said.

My mother rapidly purchased the ice cream—I wished then I hadn't asked for any—and rushed back to the train, carefully avoiding to look in our direction and entering the next car as though she really intended to walk through to the opposite end of the train.

If only he doesn't follow her, I thought over and over again. If only . . . If only . . . But apparently he had believed her. Hands clasped behind his straight back, head held high, the tip of his elegantly curved officer's cap pointing audaciously skyward, he marched patiently back and forth in his sleek, high black boots.

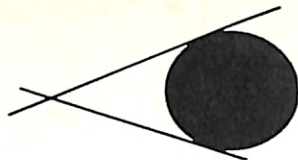
If only . . . I automatically continued to pray. At that instant my mother noiselessly entered the compartment, dropping into the corner seat nearest the door. Her hand holding the ice cream was shaking. No one spoke. Only the two little ones innocently clamored for their ice cream. I sat down close to my mother as she distributed it. I looked at mine, with the crisp chocolate coating, thinking, "If only . . ." but now I continued, "the train would leave." I guessed the others were wishing the same thing, as silently they ate their ice cream. Even Jack and Hanni were quiet and contented now, both on their mothers' laps. I bit into the glossy chocolate, tasting on my tongue the smooth coolness of vanilla cream. A jolt, and the train began to move. If my mother had lingered another minute, she would have missed it. I no longer wanted my ice cream. Strangely, it had lost its delicious flavor and begun to taste bitterly of Germany.

At the next stop only a few minutes later, my father and Onkel Meno boarded the train. As my father embraced my mother, it occurred to me that he looked different. Had I forgotten how he really looked, had he changed, or had my image of him been transformed?

At that moment, I could only hug him, very hard, with all my strength. I could not possibly tell him what a full summer it had been, and what a heroine my mother was, and how much I had missed him. At least not right then. The hug had to tell it all.

*Ruth Berges received her education in New York City, where she resides. She is the author of two books, From Gold to Porcelain (1963), and Opera: Origins and Sidelights (1961). She has contributed articles to The Saturday Review, The Connoisseur, The Antiques Journal, Opera News, Musical America, and The American-German Review. Her short stories have appeared in The University of Kansas City Review, The Reconstructionist, Opinion, The Husk, and other literary journals.*





## THE RIGHT WING

An earlier issue of FOCUS/Midwest (Vol. 3, No. 6) carried a "Roster of the Right Wing and Fanatics" describing 45 organizations located or active in Missouri and Illinois. The Roster is available at \$1 each.

### Americans for Law and Order

A new organizations, Americans for Law and Order, has been announced by two of the most indefatigable right-wingers: W. Cleon Skousen (fired as police chief by rightist Salt Lake City Mayor J. Bracken Lee) and Phyllis Schlafly. The headquarters will be at Mrs. Schlafly's home in Alton, Illinois. Among other far rightists on the Committee are Rosalind Frame (formerly secretary of "We, The People!"), Elmer Hoffman (who spoke at the grand opening of the extremist Church League of America), and George S. Schuyler (who writes for the Birch magazine).

### American Independent Party

At a St. Louis Wallace-for-President rally at which the former Alabama Governor appeared, a group of civil rights activists nearly succeeded in interrupting the proceedings. During the disturbances, some of the activists and several Wallace supporters were arrested. Both St. Louis dailies failed to report that among the arrested Wallace supporters was an admitted member of the Minutemen — the only one who carried a concealed gun.

### Remember the Pueblo Committee

The Remember the Pueblo Committee was launched at a Washington press conference by Rev. Paul D. Lindstrom, of Mt. Prospect, Illinois, who is a leader of the far-right Church of Christian Liberty.

### Corporate Giving

Senator Lee Metcalf (D. Mont.) has declared that "corporations and individuals that support organizations violently opposed to social reform and racial equality" should re-evaluate their philanthropy, referring to contributions supporting five groups:

Southern States Industrial Council, Manion Forum, America's Future, the National Education Program at Harding College, and the Committee for Constitutional Government. These, he said, "generally oppose civil rights legislation, the anti-poverty program, the income tax, the United Nations, the Supreme Court, and public power." Among corporations which contribute to such groups, Metcalf named General Electric, General Motors, Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, Firestone Tire and Rubber, and Household Finance. He added numerous electric utilities, noting that they have "the worst record of the Nation's major industries in employing members of minority races."

### Films

Liberal churches, Black Power and the anti-poverty program are the targets of three new films: *The National Education Program (Harding College)*, has a 28-minute film ("Revolution Underway!") which takes on Black Power as open warfare on the country; Major Edgar Bundy's *Church League of America* attacks its rivals for the umpteenth time ("What About the National Council of Churches?"); and the John Birch Society has just released a filmstrip ("The War on Poverty") which will cover "some aspects of the current Poor March on Washington." (JBS notes that a similar job was done about two years ago by a group assisted by them, presumably a reference to "In the Name of Poverty," produced by Constructive Action, Inc.)

### Southern States Industrial Council

The current issue of *The Citizen*, monthly organ of the (White) Citizens Council, features an article by William Lowndes, current President of the Southern States Industrial Council, a propaganda organization with a facade of business which includes some pillars from the North. Although the article is only a reprint from an SSIC publication, Lowndes has been head of the Citizens Council of South Carolina (where he runs the Southern Weaving Co.), and an editorial note identifies him as a member of the slate of electors for George Wallace. Last year, SSIC's Executive Vice President, Thurman Sensing, visited South Africa and wrote glowing reports about it. Also, SSIC exhibited at the New England Rally for God, Family and Country—essentially a Birch Society operation.

### Wanderer Forum

A lay Catholic newspaper, *The Wanderer*, which has been published 100 years mostly by the Matt family at St. Paul, Minnesota, occupies the conservative end of the Catholic press spectrum and has recently moved into more active presentation of right-wing views. Its circulation has trebled since the late 1950's, and it is about to hold its fourth annual "Wanderer Forum."

Appearing in every issue are the syndicated columns of William F. Buckley, Jr., Gen. Thomas Lane, Robert Morris, and Edith Kermit Roosevelt. Utilized almost as regularly are the materials of the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation and the newsletters of Senator Strom Thurmond (R. S.C.). The Forum brings together about 500 conferees to listen to speeches by figures such as Clarence Manion, Phyllis Schlafly, and Brent Bozell—representing a spread in viewpoint from *National Review* to the Birch Society.

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